EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON

GENDER, EDUCATION and TRAINING

Turin, 10 - 14 October 1994

United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference on Women
Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training
International Training Centre of the ILO
Turin (Italy)
10-14 October 1994

ARRIVAL NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training will take place at The International Training Centre of the ILO, in Turin, Italy, (10-14 October 1994) at the following address:

Corso Unità d'Italia 125
I-10127 Turin, Italy
Tel: 39-11-69361 or 39-11-693652
Fax: 39-11-6638842

The Centre is located at a campus, with all facilities (residence, cafeteria, restaurant, bank, post office, travel agency, etc.).

Airport transfer: If participants wish to use the Centre's transport service they should inform the Centre (Fax 3911-312 1601) of their names, arrival times and flight numbers a few days in advance. The transfer will be free of charge for experts. Observers will have to pay between US$40 and US$60. Taxi fare is slightly higher. Taxi drivers know the ILO Centre as "BIT" (Bureau International du Travail).

Visa requirements: Please note that Italy requires visa for many nationalities; we therefore expect you to enquire whether you need a visa, and if so, to make the necessary arrangements.

Lodging: All participants will be lodged at the Centre. Arrangements have been made for all to take meals together in the restaurant of the Centre. Lodging expenses for experts will be covered by the United Nations. For observers an "all in" flat fee of US$ 110 has been agreed upon with the Centre (room with full board), to be paid directly to the Centre. Payments should preferably be made in cash. VISA, Master Card and Eurocard credit cards will be accepted. 100 US$ notes cannot be accepted.

Participants can be reached 24 hours a day under the Centre's general telephone number: 399-11-69361. Participants can make telephone calls from their rooms, at their own charge, to be settled prior to departure.

Weather conditions: temperature 19-25 degrees centigrade (70-80 Fahrenheit); rain possible.

THE OPEN SPACE METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the OPEN SPACE METHODOLOGY is to maximize the value of time spent meeting as a group by having the group build its own agenda directly on priority topics about which participants have knowledge, experience and passion. The purpose of the Expert Group Meeting, as explained in the Aide-Memoire, is to take stock of the rationale for girls' education, its cross-sectoral effects and to meet the challenge of the future in accelerating female education and training in all fields by identifying concrete approaches. The basic question is which educational strategies, financing systems and policies benefit girls and women most.

The OPEN SPACE METHODOLOGY allows participants to decide on any topics under the general theme and to take a lead in discussing them. Leadership does not mean expertise or a presentation, some of the best topics are simply good questions. Participants will sign up for topics and spend time in small groups for considering them.

The objective of the Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training is to look into various topics and work out policy recommendations to be forwarded to the thirty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which acts as the preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. The outcome of the Expert Group Meeting will be two-fold:

1) a report to the Commission on the Status of Women under the priority theme "promotion of literacy, education and training including technological skills"

2) suggested proposals and wording on 'education' for the Draft platform for Action, the final document of the Fourth World Conference on Women under
> "III. Critical areas of concern" *(analysis)*
> "IV. Strategic Objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken" *(recommendations)*

Drawing on the results of the open space groups, experts and observers will meet in drafting groups to finalize the reports.

1- FEB 1995

Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training
International Training Centre of the ILO
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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

INFORMATION PAPERS

EDUC/1994/INF. 1   Programme of Work
15 September 1994

EDUC/1994/INF. 2   Arrival Note for Participants
12 September 1994

EDUC/1994/INF. 3   List of Participants
12 October 1994

EDUC/1994/INF. 4   List of Documents
12 October 1994

WORKING PAPERS

EDUC/1994/WP. 1   Gender, Education and Training - the Caribbean
9 September 1994   Perspective
                         Prepared by Dr. Lucy Steward

EDUC/1994/WP. 2   Gender and Education - Promotion of Literacy,
14 September 1994   Education and Training including Technological Skills and Science
                         Understanding among Girls and Women
                         Prepared by Jayshree A. Mehta

EDUC/1994/WP. 3   Gender and Education
15 September 1994   Prepared by Cai Sheng

1 - FEB 1995

BACKGROUND PAPERS

United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
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PROGRAMME OF WORK

Monday, 10 October 1994

10 a.m.	OPENING AND INTRODUCTION
11.30 a.m.	PRESENTATION OF CONSULTANTS ' PAPERS ON GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING
2.30 p.m	General discussion: RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE
4.30 p.m.	Introduction to the OPEN SPACE METHODOLOGY* and setting up of groups

Tuesday, 11 October 1994

9.30 a.m.	OPEN SPACE GROUPS start
2.30 p.m.	OPEN SPACE GROUPS continue

Wednesday, 12 October 1994

9.30 a.m.	PLENARY DISCUSSION
10.30	OPEN SPACE GROUPS continue
2.30 p.m.	OPEN SPACE GROUPS continue
4.30 o.m.	REPORTS FROM THE OPEN SPACE GROUPS Discussion of results

Thursday, 13 October 1994

9.30 a.m.	WORKING GROUPS on the draft report
2.30 p.m.	WORKING GROUPS continue

Friday, 14 October 1994

9.30 a.m.	Discussion of report in plenary
2.30 p.m.	Adoption of final report and recommendations

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PROGRAMME OF WORK

GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Caribbean perspective

prepared by*

Dr. Lucy Steward

Chief Programme Officer
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* The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Policy makers and educators have recognised that the education of girls and women produces significant economic and social benefits. Yet despite this acknowledgement many barriers to the participation of girls in education exist. In Commonwealth countries approximately eighty five percent of children are in school. Yet there are still about 25 million children many of whom are girls in rural areas who do not go to school, or who drop out before completing basic education.

Following the guidelines provided, this paper examines factors that affect the education of girls, partnership arrangements in education, female literacy, education of girls in the Caribbean region and concludes with recommendations in five priority areas.

Factors affecting girls education

Colin Brock and Nadine Cammish (1991) conducted a study of factors affecting female participation in education in six developing countries on behalf of the British Overseas Development Administration. They identified nine factors which are summarised below.

(i)   Geographical

Difficulties in physical access affect girls more than boys. The location of schools and the distance from home to school could be important factors especially in situations where security is a concern and in areas that are prone to extreme physical difficulties such as flooding and other hazards.

(ii)   Social-cultural

Some of the social-cultural factors that deter girls from going to school include: patriarchal systems of school organisation; early marriage; early pregnancy; domestic and subsistence duties; low regard for the value of female life; lack of understanding of the importance of girls' education; and lack of female role models.

(iii)   Health

In situations of poverty, the nutrition of girls is found to be less than that of boys. Also health problems associated with early pregnancy have a negative effect for adolescent girls.

(iv)   Economic

This is considered to be the most fundamental factor affecting girls' education. Faced with poverty, both the direct and the opportunity costs of sending girls to school place

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them at a disadvantage. In some communities, investment in girls' education is considered a waste of resources since girls marry and leave home. Interestingly, among more affluent families, education is considered to improve the value of girls as marriageable assets.

(v)   Religion

This factor should be a positive since all religions consider education to be important. However, the hierarchy of religious institutions tends to be male-oriented. It is therefore important for religious leaders to promote girls' education and to be sensitive to gender disparities in access to schooling.

(vi)   Political/Administrative

Equal educational opportunity is the goal of all Commonwealth countries. However, special measures are necessary to address concerns such as gender bias in textbooks, allocation of resources targeted to female education, and sex stereotyping in provisions such as career guidance and counselling.

(viii) Educational

Educational factors that affect girls' education include difficulties of access, lack of resources, low teacher quality and morale, lack of female teachers in some areas, and inflexibility in time of classes and curriculum.

(vi)   Legal

While most countries have introduced legislation granting equal status and opportunities for women, there is still need for policy makers and education administrators to recognize the societal norms that operate against female participation in education.

(ix)   Initiatives

Brock and Cammish (1991) identified several agencies that target their programmes on the promotion and improvement of girls' education. The work of these agencies has been invaluable in improving access to education for girls.

The factors noted above are usually taken into consideration by many agencies and non-governmental organisations in developing and implementing programmes for girls' education. Some of the strategies that are being used to improve girls' access to education include the following:

(i)   involvement of women in decision making;

(ii)   use of mother tongue as the language of instruction;

(iii) flexible hours for school;

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(iv)   separate classes;

(v)   recruitment of female teachers;

(vi)   provision of escorts;

(vii)   combining schooling with other programmes, for example with health and entrepreneurial skills development;

Partnership arrangement

Participatory processes are essential in order to ensure effectiveness and sustainability of programmes.   Participation and partnership arrangements are necessary at the political educational and community levels.

At the political level governments and non-governmental agencies can establish partnership arrangements in several ways.   Sharada Jain (1994) in a study undertaken for the Commonwealth Secretariat on out of school education in India has identified three models for partnership arrangements as described below.

(i)   The government invites a reputable NGO to "join hands" in educational programmes. The NGO retains a great deal of autonomy and the government provides resources. This is a popular model but it can be fraught with problems due to differences in ideology and suspicion;

(ii)   In some cases the government sets up an agency which operates independently like an NGO but is government funded. The main advantage of this model is the security of funding.   However, very often these QUANGOS (quasi non-governmental organisations) or GONGOs (government-organised NGOs) are subject to public criticism, suspicion and may be accused of exercising political control under the guise of operating as a NGO;

(iii)   Another model involves the creation of an autonomous body within the government administration to coordinate the activities of the NGOs.

Partnerships at the educational level can take place between educational institutions and non-formal education projects for girls education.   The benefits of these partnership arrangements include the following:

(i)   training of female teachers for non-formal education by teacher education institutions (India);

(ii)   provision of resource materials;

(iii)   use of facilities at schools for training out of school adolescents (Trinidad and Tobago);

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experience with other countries across the Commonwealth. In addition to its regional activities, CYP is also developing a special literacy project for young women in India.

Literacy programmes range from providing programmes for very basic skills to read and write to programmes for entrepreneurial skills development. In the Caribbean region, for example , women traders in the informal sector in some islands, have organised themselves to obtain assistance in learning how to complete various forms for customs and tax purposes. Another interesting development which should be researched is the acquisition by these traders of basic literacy in other languages in order to conduct trade in non-English speaking Caribbean countries.

Education of girls in the Caribbean

While a great deal of research has taken place in countries where a large percentage of girls especially in rural areas, do not go to school, research is needed in the developing Commonwealth Caribbean countries to explain why at almost all levels there are more girls than boys in school.

Brock and Cammish (1991) in their case study of Jamaica found that girls not only attend school more regularly but also achieve more steadily than boys. They perform consistently better than the boys in the Common Entrance Examinations which are terminal examinations at the primary level for the purpose of selection for the secondary level. They also perform better at the secondary level.

One critical factor which affects girls' education in Jamaica and indeed in other Commonwealth Caribbean countries is the strong matriarchal society that exists in these countries. Brock and Cammish (1991) observed that:

> Jamaican women are accustomed to gainful employment, to handling money, to taking decisions and commanding respect. Not surprisingly, daughters learn survival strategies from their mothers and boys learn to be dependent on females. This dependency is reinforced at the primary school by the predominantly female nature of the teaching force.

In all the Commonwealth Caribbean countries thiss pattern of the high achievement of girls at primary and secondary level obtains. In the area of technical and vocational education, however there are still concerns about sex stereotyping. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) suffer from problems of low status. This is due mainly to the fact that children who are considered to be low achievers for the academic areas are streamed into technical and vocational education. The girls enrolled in TVET tend to enter traditional occupational areas, although this is slowly changing.

The barriers, obstacles and problems which limit female participation in TVET in the Caribbean have been documented by Patricia Ellis (1990). She identified the following four major factors:

education at basic and secondary levels; expansion of provisions at the tertiary level; and initiatives that reflect creative responses to structural adjustment.

In recent years the quality of education has been a cause of concern. Governments faced with economic crises have had to cut education expenditure. This means that schools face difficulties in getting resource materials, the direct cost of education has increased and teachers are frequently absent from schools.

An Advisory Task Force on Education appointed by the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) identified steps that are necessary to improve the quality of education. The report of the Task Force was endorsed as the CARICOM Regional Educational Policy at a special meeting of the CARICOM Standing Committee of Ministers of Education in September 1993.

One of the major strategies for improving the quality of education focuses on teacher education. The Task Force recommended that innovative programmes for in-service training are required to upgrade the skills of teachers. School based training and distance education programmes for teachers were identified as possible options.

The Task Force also recommended improving the quality of education through systematic efforts to develop generic skills: literacy, numeracy, information processing, decision making and problem solving.

Another issue that needs to be addressed and which has particular significance for young women is the expansion of provisions at the tertiary level. Economies of scale prevent the Commonwealth Caribbean countries, like most other small states, to provide a wide range of programmes at the tertiary level. However, some interesting strategies have been taking place at the tertiary level as described below:

(i)   In some countries, the various institutions offering tertiary education are brought together to form a multipurpose institution. Examples are the College of the Bahamas and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College in Saint Lucia.

(ii)   Centres of specialisation are being established through sub-regional cooperation. For example, in the OECS countries the Antigua State College is considered the centre of specialisation for Business Studies, and the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College has been designated the centre for technical teacher education.

(iii)   Educational policy and programmes are being developed through regional cooperation. The OECS Education Reform Strategy provides a framework for the sharing of resources in educational provision in the OECS countries. At the wider regional level, the CARICOM Secretariat, acting on mandates from the Ministers of Education, coordinated the preparation of a Regional Strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (1990) and the Regional Education Policy (1993).

The third concern of structural adjustment affects all sectors but more so the social sectors which include education.

Most Caribbean countries are implementing structural adjustment programmes with the common formula of demand restraint (reduction in public expenditure, credit control and real wage restraint); switching policies (devaluation and exchange rate reform); and long term policies (financial reform and trade liberalisation).

The effects of structural adjustment on the education sector in the Commonwealth Caribbean have serious implications for the quality of education. As a consequence of structural adjustment measures governments have been forced to make cuts in salaries; reduce the number of teachers; remove subsidies, book allowances and other grants; and reduce expenditure on resource materials.

The educational concerns that emanate from structural adjustment policies affect both male and female students. However, female students are particularly affected, as women in general suffer extra hardships linked to structural adjustment in their role as producers, mothers, home managers and community organizers.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is engaged in work in helping Commonwealth Caribbean countries to deal with the effects of structural adjustment on the education sector. A project "Educational Responses to Structural Adjustment" is being developed which aims to:

(i)   promote dialogue and understanding between Ministers of Education and Finance and with the international community;

(ii)   upgrade the skills of ministry staff in preparing and negotiating budgets and projects;

(iii)   develop a capability in the Ministries of Education for the generation of information to support the budget process and to manage and maintain information systems;

(iv)   enhance the understanding of policy options available within a context of structural adjustment;

(v)   improve skills and assist the practice of Ministries of Education and Finance in negotiating with external agencies.

Measures are being taken to ensure that women participate in the project activities and that gender issues are factored into the policy dialogue models that are used for decision making.

Unlike many other developing countries, those of the Commonwealth Caribbean provide data that show better attendance and performance of girls and women at all levels of the education system. There is need for research into the factors that contribute to this phenomenon and for programmes informed by research findings to redress continuing gender imbalances.

Priority areas

This paper has given a broad overview of factors that affect girls' education and some of the concerns about education in general in the Caribbean region. In concluding I have identified for consideration the following five priority areas:

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(i)   establishment of mechanisms by both government and non governmental organisations to include women in decision making. These mechanisms can be developed by strengthening already existing administrative arrangements such as Women's Bureaux in some countries. The Commonwealth Secretariat is assisting with the strengthening of national machineries for women affairs;

(ii)   allocation of resources targeted on female education. In some situations measures requiring special funding are necessary to improve girls' access to education;

(iii)   provision of training for women to advance careers in educational administration. The Commonwealth Secretariat, for example, has as part of its Higher Education Programme, a pan-Commonwealth project for women managers in higher education; also through the Women and Youth Affairs Division, a project is being implemented to improve the decision-making skills of women managers;

(iv)   development of plans and programmes by international agencies, governments and non-governmental organisations, which state explicitly the objectives, projects and resources aimed at improving girls' education and female participation in the education sector at all levels;

(v)   establishment of an inter-agency group with sub-committees to advise on, coordinate and monitor programmes for girls' education.

Reference

1   Brock, C and Cammish N K (1991). <u>Factors affecting female participation in six
        developing countries.</u> Overseas Development Administration.

2   Brown, L (1993). Preparing the future by changing the present: Women literacy and
        development. <u>Oxford studies in comparative education,</u> <u>3</u> (2), pp109-129.

3   CARICOM Secretariat (1990).   <u>CARICOM regional strategy for technical and
        vocational education and training</u>. Georgetown, Guyana.

4   CARICOM Secretariat (1993). <u>Regional educational policy</u>. Georgetown, Guyana.

5   Ellis, P (1990). <u>Measures increasing the participation of girls and women in technical
        and vocational education and training: A Caribbean study</u>.   Commonwealth
        Secretariat, London.

6   Jain, S (1994). <u>Education of out of school children: Case studies from India</u>. In
        press. Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

Dr Lucy Steward
9 September 1994

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GENDER AND EDUCATION
**Promotion of Literacy, Education and Training including
Technological Skills and Science Understanding among Girls and Women**

prepared by*

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Gender and Education

Promotion of Literacy, Education and Training including Technological Skills and Science Understanding among Girls/Women

by

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Gender and Education

Development of any society is closely linked with the acquisition of basic education, understanding of science and use of simple technologies by people at large and especially by women. No society or nation can keep half of its population i.e. women away from the basic scientific and technological skills required in this era. Education has been regarded as a very powerful tool for overcoming the barriers and difficult situations that large populations in the developing countries are facing today. It has been accepted that the investment on female education not only brings the desired economic gains but more so the social gains which are long term returns lasting for generations.

The rapid developments of Science and Technology and its impact on global markets and economies have created new challenges to education systems and policy makers all over the world. Education has to play a key role in the development of human beings and by helping to increase democratic participation in decision making in the society. Therefore we must ensure that equal access to education is provided to girls at an early age and to all women in the rural and urban poor communities. Education will have to play a vital role in bringing equality and empowerment among women who mainly belong to the weaker section of society and whose struggle for survival has become increasingly diificult. Women in traditional societies are forced to cope with the socio-cultural pressures and economic odds.

Several studies all over the world and particularly in developing countries have revealed that there are wide disparities and inequalities between men and women in all areas such as access to educational opportunities, availability to health care, food intake, energy consumption, employment, income and credit facilities. Studies on women employment have shown that modernization of technology has led to a concentration of women in domestic and labor intensive activities. Women who have traditionally been the basic educators and health providers in the family have received the least benefits from technological developments. They are the last to receive training opportunities. Their unrecorded and unpaid work in all fields, from home to agriculture, has provided them with the least assets. Research data show that female literacy plays an important role in raising productivity levels, reduction of child mortality rates and control of population growth. Women's exposure to various technologies from simple to complex and the use of eco-friendly technologies in their daily life will improve their quality of life. The need to regard women as equal partners in the development process has been accepted by all nations.

The global perspective - Female education

The situation at present is alarming regarding female education, especially in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Worldwide, one out of three women is illiterate compared to one out of five men. In South Asia two out of three women and one out of three men are illiterate. About 65 % of the worlds total illiterates are women (about 580 million). Out of 130 million children who are deprived of primary education, 90 million are girls.

In South Asia one million girl babies die every year before they are born. The preferance of a family to a male child over a girl child, social customs, economic situations, cultural and religious barriers play a negative role in the girls' higher education. Even though the enrollment of girls in the firsl level of education has improved over the last two decades, their drop-out rates are much higher than the boys' before they finish primary school. Young girls are taken out of school due to the pressure of work at home such as caring younger brothers and sisters, fetching water, collecting fodder and firewoods for cooking, and helping parents in agriculture.

The average school life expectancy for the six year old girl in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa is about 2 - 5 years, compared to 14 - 16 years of school life expectancy for the similar age girl in the developed world.

The complexity of factors influencing girls' involvement in Science and Technology and their discontinuing interest at an adolescent age have been apparant. The cultural stereotyping of boys and girls, the objectives and organization of education systems, the images of Science and Technology courses and their presentation and practices are not encouraging to girls. Research on gender issues in science reveal that in many cases teachers' attitude and textbook presentation are the negative elements for girls' participation in the developed countries, while parental/family attitudes play a critical role in the developing countries. The irrelevancy of textbook material to daily life, the failure in providing 'hands-on' experience, the level of language used and the lack of female role models add to the discouragement. In some countries even textbooks are not available to all children, and they may have to study in a language other than their mother tongue which makes it difficult for many children who are the first generation learners. The expences involved for participation in Science and Technology courses are higher than in those of other general subjects, hence the economic factor also comes in.

Changing goals

The present mode of formal science education has not created scientific literacy or scientific understanding. The formal education system does not take into consideration the background experiences the child brings to school. It has not developed efficient teaching and learning strategies for the large number of schools where there are 50 or more children per teacher. Science education has to be related to the social, cultural and environmental backdrop of the learner. If education has to develop people oriented and life related literacy, then what type of education do we need? How do we then define scientific literacy?

Education which enables us to cope with our daily life and improve its quality, which makes us understand and care for our environment, which helps in developing our potential and creativity, which creates confidence and self-reliance, which involves people in desicion-making, should be the ultimate goal.

In most countries women have been the primary caretakers of the environment for generations. They are the custodians of indigenous knowledge in several areas, such as herbal medicines, agricultural practices and food preservation. Yet policy makers continue to ignore the centrality of womens' interests and needs. These needs are not reflected in

the educational systems at any level. With these perspectives we shall have to build new formal as well as nonformal education systems, addressing the following questions: What type of Science and Technology education should be given at the primary, secondary and community level? How do we make education accessible and relevant to all? How do we ensure that there are several entry points for enhancing the skills and building the understanding of science and technology for the women at large?

Nonformal education

Nonformal education in Science and Technology is a recent phenomenon. It has developed only in the last 2 decades. Not much research is currently available yet to measure its impact and development. Nonformal education may need to be expanded in the coming decades. Sub-Saharan Africa has nearly 50 % of its population under 15 years of age. In South Asia, more than 40 % of the population is under 15 years of age, compared to only 20 % of the population in the developed countries. Nearly seven out of eight of the world's children under the age of 15 now live in developing countries. This young population poses new challenges to the education systems in these countries. With limited resources the developing countries need to meet the enormous demand of their young population. In such circumstances nonformal education requires special attention.

Nonformal approaches to basic education for school children and youth have grown in many countries and have been advocated by many educationists. Many private, voluntary and and nongovernmental organizations have played a leading role in the development of such approaches. They require highly innovative structure, content and methodologies. Nonformal education requires greater flexibility, creativity and direct linkage with real life situations. Scientific and Technological Literacy (STL) and Education for All (EFA) should be defined in terms of relevance, usefulness and continuance to make them a life-long process. Adult education will have to take into consideration these new approaches.

Science 'Clinics' for girls in Ghana, Science Road Shows in Botswana, and People Science Movements (Science Jatha) and the Science Circus in India are unique examples in this regard. BRAC in Bangladesh has successfully adopted nonformal educational approaches. Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and SEWA in Ahmedabad, India have provided successful examples of credit facilities to women in an unorganized sector. **Education and employment are the two key facors leading women to empowerment and equality.**

The different levels of nonformal and informal methods and techniques used in the various regions of the world require deep analysis. A diversity of programmes and a variety of media have emerged in different societies, and one has to be careful in using or adapting the ones which are suitable to the social, cultural fabric of the society.

New Approaches to Informal Science and Technology

New approaches to informal science and technology have been developed by various groups in many countries, using different media and through community science centers, science museums etc. Informal science and technology has to be related to people's life

styles and situations. It has to be need based and relevant, using local examples.

Unfortunately no systematic research or compilation has been available about promising examples covering programmes or experiences in this area in different cultures or societies. Very little research has been done into the extent of effectiveness and specific strategies of informal science education. We have not yet created an evaluation system to measure its effectiveness.

The Public Understanding of Science and Technology

What do we mean by 'public understanding of Science and Technology'? Science literacy does not consist of knowing a certain number of scientific facts. Science literacy for common people is literacy that is required to understand their immediate environment, which helps them to solve their day-to-day problems and which helps them to be self-reliant and improve their quality of life. The sensitiveness and understanding required for such literacy can be found even among people who have never gone through the formal science education process. The scientific approach of sheep farmers and women taking care of animals and farms may be less generally 'authoritative' but more systematic and accurate than the information of formal scientists.

This raises a basic question: What are science attitudes and how are scientific attitudes created? Science information alone does not create scientific attitudes. Scientific attitudes require one to use scientific methods: careful observation, experimentation, data gathering, reasoning and analysing. It is a preparation for a life-long education process which helps in probing, questioning and reasoning, looking into situations from several angles, working out solutions. This type of scientific attitude is helpful in all walks and fields of life. The scientific attitude does not allow one to accept things blindly. It helps in creating values. The threshold and level of scientific literacy varies from culture to culture. It should be decided at the community level. Collective actions of a community will bring changes in the way science and technology are used as a symbol of power and affluence. The mode, methods and materials need to be evolved and will vary from one society to another.

Quality of education

Many developing countries are addressing themselves to the question of quality of education. Improvements in curricula, textbooks, learning/teaching materials and teacher training require long term committments and investments. We need to examine the national plans with the gender perspective. Courses for teachers on gender sensitization need to be developed and implemented. Women educators and teachers must be involved in the educational planning, policy framing and implementation.

The cost effectiveness in such innovative programs should be carefully worked out. The high drop out rate among young children results in a massive waste in the education system, leading to illiteracy. Since girls form a major component of dropouts special awareness campaigns regarding the importance of girls' education addressing families and parents should be developed.

Some suggestions have been outlined here for discussions and consideration. They can be reshaped, modified and repositioned depending upon the country's context.

Issues	Strategies / Research/ Action Programs	National Policy implications
1) Enrollment of girls in the first level of Education	Study of parents' attitudes. Socio/economic conditions and girls' enrollment. Study of factors influencing non-enrollment of girls. Young girls' work burden at home.	Primary Education to be made compulsory. Creating 'watch groups' reaching the target of 100% girls enrollment.
2) Retention of girls in primary schools (at least up to Vth grade)	Study of drop-out rate among girls at various levels and factors influencing the drop-outs.	Free Educational material subsidised clothes and free meals. Compulsory education up to Vth grade. Flexibility of school timing and vicinity of schools within a walking distance of one km.
3) Child rearing practices and importance of girls' education.	Study on parents' attitudes, educated and illiterate, urban and rural parents. Study on changing social patterns & girls' education. Folk groups' performances on this issue in villages. Use of mass media.	Devotion of mass media for projection of importance of girl's education. Incentive to parents for sending girls to schools.
4) Improvement in textbooks, science curricula and development of the support materials.	Innovative projects in development. Trial of new curricula and low cost support material to make it relevant and need-based. Study on level of language in text books and scientific terminologies. Study on negative images and negative visions on women's participation in science. Relating science with everyday life through familiar examples.	Curricula planning, development in a decentralized way. Flexibility for local adaptations. Development of scientific terminologies in regional languages. Removal of negative images about women and inculcating positive images about women's role in science involving women as writers.

Issues	Strategies / Research/ Action Programs	National Policy implications
10) Improvement in curricula and awareness about environment at the second level and third level of education.	Making curricula study at the second level and improvement in terms of new areas related to environment & global change. Improved textbooks & support material.	Leading women scientists & Women educators to be involved in reframing curricula and development of material.
11) Teacher training institutions and their role in science and technology education.	Conducting inservice, pre-service teacher education programmes from time to time. Research on teachers' attitudes, understanding and gender-related sensitivity.	Revision of Teacher Training Institutes' courses in terms of improvement of quality and content of education. Drawing attention to gender issues.
12) Vocational education and polytechnics.	A study on vocational education and girls' participation. Research on polytechnics and girls' development of skills, understanding.	New courses to be introduced at vocational level. Improvement of polytechnic courses. Ensuring enrollment of 30-50% girls.
13) Science popularisation programmes for the community.	Study on scientific awareness among communities. Community-based action programme for environmental issues. Use of folk formats and science demonstrations to reach the masses. Use of mass media for creating awareness.	Setting up science centres in rural and urban areas. Setting up science play rooms, exhibitions. Organising science Jatha, science clubs and science fairs.
14) Parents' attitudes towards girls' career choices.	Development of relevant information material on career choices. Establishing parents' and girls' dialogues and possible interventions against social prejudices.	Creating career guidance centres in science and technology.
15) Women's participation in higher level education as professors, lecturers and in research programmes.Participation in engineering, marine science, bio-technology research courses.	Survey on type of women's participation at higher level. Study on difficulties faced by women at higher levels in education and employment.	Creating special watch groups for ensuring women's participation at higher levels.

Issues	Strategies / Research/ Action Programs	National Policy implications
16) Simple and appropriate technologies for women, for use in their daily life - at home, in agricultural, in crafts, etc.	Development inputs in home, farm, animal-related activities. Research on crafts and science interventions and technology inputs.	Creating science and technology councils for relating and developing science & technology inputs in traditional crafts, in farms and at home.
17) Technology transfer and development of appropriate technology. Employment opportunities and guidance centres. Connecting education with work places.	Research on appropriate technologies for women. Study of women entrepreneurs & their needs. Projection about adaptation of technology for women. Establishing network of women technologists & scientists.	Establishing employment guidance centres along with technology parks. Exhibitions of appropriate technology products & technology at special trade fairs, for women entrepreneurs.
18) Indigenous knowledge : research and development	Scientific research on 'science within indigenous knowledge' Documentation of indigenous technologies & cultural practices. Awareness about indigenous practices & technologies in the textbooks.	Establishing centres for indigenous knowledge & Technology. Promotion of indigenous knowledge & cultural practices which are environmentally sound.
19) Participation in educational, decision-making committees and forums at local and national levels.	A study on women's participation in decision making in Education. Establishing networks among women's organisations to make it a powerful body for such a probe.	All committees on education, science & technology should include atleast 30% women members.
20) Setting up non-formal W I S E centres - (Women In Science, Technology and education.) Providing support services and guidance to other women's groups at the grassroots level.	Like WID groups, establish WISE groups (women in science, technology and education). Research on non-formal science, and technology. Education for women at the grassroots levels.	Establishing a national commission to increase participation of women in science, technology, industry and education (WISE)

GENDER AND EDUCATION

prepared by*

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* The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

Speech by Mme. Cai Sheng
at the
Expert Group Meeting on
Gender, Education and Training

Respected Chairman and dear delegates,

Today, I feel very pleased to attend this Expert Group Meeting on gender, education and training, as a representative of the All-China Women's Federation, a non-governmental organization of China.

As is known to all, without the participation of women it is difficult to achieve any economic, cultural and social development in a country, a region or in the world. Women's education is the most important strategic measure to facilitate women's all-round involvement in development and to improve women's status. Now I would like to explain this to you through the examples of girls' education and women's literacy drive in China.

I. Situation of girls' education and analysis of its reasons

In old China, 80% of the population was illiterate. Among the nation's illiterates, women accounted for more than 90%.

Since the founding of new China in 1949, it is stipulated in the Constitution that women enjoy equal rights with man in all the spheres of life, political, economic, cultural and social, including family life, having thereby provided legal guarantee of women's access to education.

To eliminate illiteracy and improve people's cultural quality, the State has reformed the educational system, readjusted the educational structure and formulated an educational policy of training people serving social production, who are developed in an all-round way, i.e., morally, intellectually and physically, so as to bring marked progress to educational undertakings.

Take primary education as an example:

Year	enrollment rate of school-age children	enrollment rate of girls
1949	20%	approx. 15%
1985	95.9%	93.5%
1993	97.7%	96.8%

In 1993, among the 2,610,000 children unable to go to school, 70% were girls, who mainly lived in China's northwest and southwest provinces or regions. For instance, girls enrollment rates in Qinghai, Guizhou, Ningxia and Gansu provinces were 10 - 20 percentage points lower than the nation's average.

Here, I list six major reasons as follows:

1. Productive capacities were low, economic development was slow, some people still did not have adequate food and clothing. People could not afford tuition fees for too many children. They often sent their boys to school while kept their girls at home to do household chores or to take part in field work in order to help out with family expenses.

2. In a few areas, there still prevailed the feudal ideas of regarding men as superior to women or male superiority over the female. People there held that girls should stay at home to play their roles as wives and mothers. Therefore, to supply educational funds to them was unnecessary. In some other areas, people placed restrictions on girls' going to school according to religious habits, customs and disciplines.

3. There weren't enough schools to cover the entire region, geographical conditions were unfavorable and transport facilities were inadequate and inhabitants were scattered from place to place. As a result, students had to travel long to reach their schools, which particularly affected girls' enrollment rate.

4. In some families, girls devoted all their spare time to housework and field labor, having thus affected their studies, too. As a result, many girls could not catch up with others and finally dropped out.

5. Some remote areas and some regions where minority nationalities lived in compact communities did not have enough female teachers. This made girls' going to school and boarding in such schools very inconvenient, which also affected girls enrollment rate.

6. Curricula in some schools were short of local and national characteristics, divorced from local people's production or unitary in their forms. They did not attach enough importance to non-formal education, neglecting girls' special needs. Therefore, some families did not want to send their girls to school.

II. Strategies and measures to promote girls' education

1. Formulate relevant laws, regulations and supporting policies.

China has formulated and implemented the *"Compulsory Education Law"*, *"Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the Protection of Rights and Interests of*

Women", *"Law of the PRC on the Protection of Minors"* and other relevant laws, to ensure girls' fundamental rights to receive education. At the same time, researches on countermeasures to ensure girls' education have been intensified, which are on trial in northwest and southwest of China, and experiences in these areas are summarized and popularized timely. The Government also enhanced its coordination with people of all circles to hold seminars on this special topic. It, together with the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), sponsored four meetings on girls' education in the last ten years, at which problems were studied and policies and measures were worked out.

2.   Mobilize the whole society to create favourable social and family environment for girls' education.

The Government gives wide publicity to equality between men and women and to girls' education through mass media. It also, in cooperation with social forces, compiles publicity materials, starts parents' schools and organizes activities to commend good parents, in order to win the support of the family and society.

3.   Collect educational funds through various channels to improve the conditions of running schools, change their unitary form into diversified ones and add to the vitality of the school.

Schools and educational departments at various levels, relying on social forces, collect funds, improve school facilities and develop work-study programs in light of local characteristics. In this way, they are not only able to cultivate children's labor habits, but also to increase school income. Not a few places started girls' primary schools, girls' classes, ethnic groups' boarding schools, bilingual classes, double classes, half-day schools as well as mobile educational tours, having greatly raised girls' enrollment rate and achieved remarkable success in making girls carry on their studies.

4.   Compile teaching materials and organize teaching activities in light of local and national characteristics, making them suited to the needs of the family and society; improve girls' abilities of self-reliance and knowledge of making a living by themselves, combining their skills in work and common knowledge in daily life with their cultural knowledge, so as to arouse girls interests in study and add to educational attraction.

5.   Train women school masters and women teachers, run girls' classes and improve the management of the school.

The State pays special attention to girls' enrollment into secondary normal colleges. In remote, mountainous and minority nationality areas, importance is attached to the cultivation of women school masters and women teachers through various kinds of training programs. Better the management of girls' schools, girls' classes and boarding schools, beautify educational environment, enrich school curricula and pay attention to the

reasonable arrangements of students' lives. Some non-governmental organizations also energetically help with classes specially catered to girls. For example, since 1988, the ACWF has assisted in the establishment of over 2,00(girls' classes in poor and minority nationality areas and helped more than 10,000 girls finish their primary school studies. In 1989, the China Children and Teenagers Foundation established a special fund for girls to go to school. In 1992, the funding was named as "*Spring Bud Program*", mobilizing and calling upon millions of masses in the country to help girl drop-outs and girls unable to continue their studies, to return to their schools. This Program won the appreciation of state leaders and the society as a whole. The family of Chen Muhua, Chairman of the ACWF, helped nine girls finish their primary school studies. Cadres of women's federations at all levels also participated in this activity with great enthusiasm.

III. Situation of women in wiping out illiteracy and relevant strategies

Since 1949, 119,000,000 women have overcome illiteracy in the national literacy drive, accounting for 70% of the total new literates. This made the proportion of China's illiterate population decline from 80% in 1949 to 15.88% in 1990.

Major strategies cover the following five aspects:

1. Make eliminating illiteracy among women the focal point of the literacy drive and establish special agencies for this purpose. In coordination with social forces, governmental departments concerned, from the central to the provincial, prefectural and county levels, give guidance to literacy drive, work out plans and monitor their implementation.

Set forth concrete objectives of overcoming illiteracy among women, in line with the United Nations' goal of "education for all by the year 2000", urge governments at various levels to augment their political commitment and give necessary guarantee of policies and funds.

2. Compile teaching materials well, to meet the practical needs of life and production.

In the course of compiling teaching materials, combine cultural education, in light of the requirements of social development, with the popularization of common knowledge of daily life, legal knowledge, knowledge of maternal and child health care, population education and environment education, meanwhile, combine it with practical professional skill training, having thus enriched the contents of the materials, made them closely related with women's lives and production, as well as given women an impetus to study. In recent years, 5,000,000 people in our country overcome illiteracy annually. Among them 3,500,000 are women.

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3. Encourage social involvement, initiate diversified and flexible ways of over-coming illiteracy.

Literacy coordination agencies, from the central down to various local levels, mobilize forces of all circles to participate in the literacy drive. Women's federations in rural areas have particularly gone deep into the grassroots to do careful work in organizing women, supervising teaching, enlightening women's household burdens as well as helping women with their studies by giving supplementary lectures. For example, cadres of the local women's federation organize literacy classes for women during slack seasons, give lectures to women masses at their homes, set up temporary nurseries and etc.. Since 1989, the ACWF, together with governmental departments concerned, launched in rural areas the campaign of "*two learnings and two competitions*", to help women acquire knowledge, master modern agricultural technology and to emulate each other's achievements and contributions, mainly for peasant women at 15-40 years. In the past four years, 120,000,000 women took part in this campaign, having aroused their sense of self-reliance and awareness of competition as well as advanced their general knowledge and technical skills. Of them, 80% increased their family incomes with the skills they acquired, having raised their economic, cultural, social status and their status in the family.

4. Set up surveillance, evaluation and reward systems.

The state education departments have incorporated literacy campaign into the nation's existing system for education-surveillance and set up a system of commending and giving awards to people who contribute to the campaign. In 1990, the State Education Commission and the ACWF started the "*Women's Literacy Award*" to commend outstanding women teachers and students in this aspect. They also formulated policies to encourage women's participation in overcoming illiteracy. For instances, in some areas, women casting off illiteracy enjoy priority in getting loans, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides; young women free from illiteracy have the priority to enter into rural township enterprises or enterprises located in other parts of the country.

5. Combine literacy drive with prevention of the emergence of new illiterates; combine wiping out illiteracy with post-literacy and continuing education activities.

Organize and mobilize women into literacy drive together with the popularization of primary education. In areas inhabited by numbers of illiterates, promote the education of mothers to bring along the education of girls. Continuing education with regard to population, laws, environment, hygiene, health care and professional skill training should be carried out, enabling women to cast off illiteracy in functional literacy drive, apply what they have learned to the life and production and sustain the literacy levels they achieved.

IV. Recommendations

In order to improve the quality of girls' education, help women overcome illiteracy and enhance the development of women's human resource and proceeding from China's practical experience, I would like to end my speech with the following recommendations on the Programme of Action:

1. Intensify government actions, urge governments of different countries to enforce their political commitments and request them to raise the proportion of inputs for social development, including education, to a certain degree.

2. Mobilize the society extensively, create social and family environment favorable to women's education, urge social forces to monitor the implementation of laws, regulations, plans and programs concerning women's education.

3. Carry out reforms of the educational system and in teaching materials, conduct education on sex, laws, population and environment, meanwhile, delete those contents discriminating against women. Integrate formal education with non-formal education, and cultural education with skill training; advocate running more schools of various types.

4. For the difficult areas, such as in remote, mountainous and minority nationality areas or in dry lands and for women masses in difficult circumstances, including disabled girls and women as well as girls and women of minority nationalities, special plans and policies should be worked out, putting stress on supporting them with educational undertakings.

5. Promote inter-country and inter-regional cooperation, increase the inputs of supporting agencies for WID (women in development) projects and projects on education, training, health care and family planning. It is requested that the total amount of these inputs should be raised to a certain proportion.

Thank you.

CLOSING THE WORLDWIDE GENDER GAP IN EDUCATION

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Closing the Worldwide Gender Gap in Education[1]

M. Anne Hill[2]

During the past three decades, improving education has been a major policy goal in most developing countries, reflecting the broad recognition that investing in education contributes to economic growth. There exists overwhelming evidence that education enhances productivity and income growth in developing countries. Educating <u>women</u> has additional beneficial effects on a vast array of measures of social well-being. Better educated women are more productive in the workplace and in the home. By decreasing fertility, population pressure eases; by improving the family's health, life expectancy increases and the quality of life rises, not only for the family, but also for the community. Indeed, a country's failure to raise the education of women to levels equal to those of men may impose substantial cost for development efforts by slowing the rate of growth in GDP per capita.

While educational progress has been enjoyed by both sexes during the past thirty years, these advances have failed to eradicate the gender gap. Evidence across regions reveals patterns in school enrollment ratios and literacy that are starkly divided along gender lines. In the developing world (apart from Latin America and the Caribbean) enrollment ratios of girls lag behind those for boys. In 1990, the worldwide proportion of girls ages 6 to 11 years enrolled in school was only three-fourths the ratio for boys of the same ages; for girls ages 12 to 17 years it was only two-thirds; and for young women ages 18 to 23 years, the enrollment level was less than one-half the level for young men. And lower enrollment ratios translate into reduced educational attainment. Table 1, which uses new measures of

the stock of education estimated by Dubey and King (1994), depicts the levels of education, by region, for young men and women ages 15 to 24. Between 1960 and 1987, the stock of education attained by young women experienced rapid growth in developing countries, at an an average annual increase of 9.5 percent as against 4.8 percent for young men. Despite this growth, the level of female educational attainment to that of males remained at an average of 0.70 for the 63 developing countries included in the analysis. Moreover, the rate of progress for young women in South Asia appeared to slow between 1980 and 1987.

Barriers to Female Education

Girls face barriers that serve to limit their educational opoportunities. These obstacles begin in the home, extend to the school, and ultimately spill over into the labor market.

Family Decisions

Educational choices involve investment decisions requiring current expenditures and foregone opportunities with the prospect of returns in the future. These choices are made, at least in the early years. by a child's parents. The outcomes indicate that even at the youngest ages, a gender gap in education emerges. Why might parents treat sons and daughters differently when allocating the family's resources? The extent to which costs and benefits of education differ for boys and girls can impart an apparent gender bias in parental choices and lead to different educational outcomes for sons and daughters, even when parental preferences are gender neutral. In many developing countries, even when schooling is publicly provided, much of the cost of education is borne privately, and these private costs, including the out-of-pocket expenditures, such as school fees, textbooks, uniforms, and perhaps most importantly the opportunity cost of the child's time in school, can be quite large. Any

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divergence in these costs in favor of boys over girls can lead parents to choose rationally that boys receive more education.

In some rural societies, boys perform a larger share of family labor (e.g., herding livestock or plowing fields). However, with few exceptions, girls do more home and market place work than boys (refer to Table 2 for some examples). They cook, clean house, fetch water, and help their mothers care for younger children, especially those who are ill. In Nepal and Java, for example, most young girls spend at least one-third more hours per day working at home and market than boys of the same age, and in some age groups as much as 85 percent more hours (Nag and others 1980). These examples provide further evidence that gender inequality exists even at early ages.

Besides lost work, parents may feel that girls forego important childcare, household and craft training at home if they go to school. The relative importance of these foregone training opportunities will differ across countries depending, in particular, on the expected adult occupation. For example, if most women enter the informal labor market by continuing in a crafts tradition (or in agriculture), the skills for which are imparted by their mothers, then the cost of attending formal schooling must include not only the opportunity cost of current time, but also the lost alternative training.[3]

In addition to the financial costs and opportunity costs of schooling, educating girls may exact non-pecuniary or "psychic" costs as well. In certain settings, socio-cultural factors (such as norms proscribing societal, economic, and familial roles of women) and

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[3] In some societies, still another opportunity cost of schooling is the earlier use that the family can make of the brideprice for daughters. Delaying marriage due to schooling postpones receiving the bride wealth and may even reduce its amount if there is greater value placed on younger, than on more educated, brides.

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religion strongly influence the behavior of parents by imposing a heavy cost on nonconformist behavior. These may bear significantly on schooling decisions. In countries in which females are usually secluded, for example, girls may attend only schools that do not admit boys or only those that employ female teachers. The importance of preserving a young girl's reputation in such cultures leads to high dropout rates among girls at the onset of puberty (Caldwell and others 1985; Papanek 1985). A related concern is that parents may consider education itself to reduce a young woman's suitability to be a good wife. In many traditional societies, education beyond the acquisition of literacy threatens women's possibilities for marriage.

Even when education is public and tuition is "free" in most countries around the world, school attendance still entails cost outlays from family resources. Contributions to the school, learning materials, and boarding fees are some of the non-tuition costs of sending children to school. Families also incur additional expenses for uniforms and transport to school. For a variety of reasons, these out-of-pocket expenses may be different for boys and girls. Parents may be more reluctant to send daughters to school without proper attire, thus raising the cost of school attendance for girls, relative to boys.

Parents in many countries depend on their adult children for support during their older years. Cultural practices may dictate that parents receive greater returns from their sons' education than their daughters', especially when it is the adult sons who are expected to be financially responsible for aged parents. When girls "marry out" of their own family and into their husband's family, parents may recoup little if any, of the returns from their daughters' education.

Thus, parents may believe that the costs of educating girls are relatively higher and the benefits relatively lower that those of educating boys. As a result of these gender differences, parents, making an "optimal" decision from their own perspective, may invest more in their sons' education.

The School

The school environment exerts its own influence on female education. Despite compulsory education laws, open admissions policies, and "free" education, schools may be "closed" or inaccessible to girls and women. There are barriers at the postprimary education level with gender-specific admissions policies in certain areas of study. Anecdotal evidence from many developing countries suggests that parents are reluctant to send their daughters to distant schools because of the fear of moral or physical peril, necessitating boarding and lodging arrangements costs that are higher for girls. Even in the relatively more open societies of Malaysia and the Philippines, distance to school is a greater deterrent to girls' enrollment than to boys' (King and Lillard 1987). And school facilities themselves can be hostile to girls. In Bangladesh, parents have withdrawn girls but not boys from schools without latrines; and in Pakistan, many parents worry about enrolling girls in schools without boundary walls providing privacy (Khan 1993). Kuwait and Saudi Arabia (in contrast to Morocco and Egypt) illustrate how wealth has increased school facilities for girls so that the demands of culture are met.

Barriers to girls' education also begin at the primary school level where teachers and textbooks project attitudes that discourage performance of girls, or promote stereotypes of girls not being as capable as boys in learning technical subjects or mathematics. Studies

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have found that single-sex schools may be more effective for girls' learning. In Thailand, these schools make a difference; even after controlling for such factors as socioeconomic home background and school resources, girls achieved more in single-sex schools than in coeducational schools, while boys did better in the latter (Jimenez and Lockheed 1989).

The Labor Market

Discriminatory employment practices against women have limited their work opportunities and have reduced the earnings they can expect to gain from education. In certain occupations, entry barriers, such as restrictions against hiring married women, serve as obstacles to receiving the full returns to education. Even in East Asia and Latin America where more women are entering the formal labor market, women workers are still concentrated in a few jobs which are generally characterized as of low skill, low wages and low mobility. In Malaysia, Wang (1982) found that girls expected their salaries to be lower than those boys would get, and believed that the range of jobs for them is more restricted. These expectations, in turn, affected educational aspirations.

Taken together, these various factors determine whether girls enter school, how long they remain in school, and how well they perform. The worldwide result has been that girls and women attain lower levels of schooling than do boys and men. In order to begin to close the gender gap in educational attainment, policies must address the sources of inequality within the family, the school, and the labor market.

Rationale for Educating Girls

Benefits for the Family

While educational investment decisions made by parents may indeed be economically "optimal" from their private perspective, education clearly imparts social benefits experienced beyond the individual family. These social benefits range from fostering economic growth to extending the average life expectancy in the population, even to improving political processes. The degree to which the social benefits from women's education exceed the private benefits, compared with men's education, may worsen the gender bias in education in favor of males if parents are primarily concerned with maximizing the schooling investments returns to their own family. As a consequence, public support of gender-specific interventions may be especially warranted.

There is a growing body of literature that examines the benefits of educating women in developing countries (see Schultz 1993 for a survey). The largest body of empirical evidence focuses on the benefits experienced in the formal labor market in the form of better employment opportunities and higher earnings since these benefits can be readily measured. Yet we clearly understate the benefits to education, especially for women, when we consider labor market returns alone. In many developing countries, women participate in large numbers in the informal sector of the economy, within which the returns from education may equal or exceed those in the formal market. These returns are more difficult to calibrate if work is unpaid or if earnings are poorly measured. If women specialize in the care of their families, we will not observe any labor market earnings for them, yet the benefits to their education can be quite significant. Higher levels of education will improve their productivity

in the home which will be manifested in improved family health and nutrition, child survival, and children's schooling.

In order to accommodate the demands of motherhood, many employed women leave the labor market or switch to jobs that allow flexible hours or that require fewer hours of work. For these women, it is all the more important that calculations of the benefits from women's education include returns to nonmarket as well as market activities.

Numerous studies have shown that higher education for mothers is associated with healthier children (Strauss (1990), Thomas (1991), Wolfe and Behrman (1987)). The benefits of women's education for family health are realized through several pathways. A more educated mother may be more informed about proper hygiene and a healthy diet, may have a greater appreciation for health care and personal hygiene and may be more willing to make the investment of her time and resources, she may have greater access to information about health services, and may simply be better able to put her knowledge into practice. An educated mother may be better equipped to maintain good hygiene and sanitation practices even when clean water and sanitation services are in poor supply. And when such services are available, she may be more likely to use them because she appreciates their value. A study of the determinants of chronic malnutrition among children in the Philippines found that mother's schooling and the availability of safe drinking water explained health differences among children whereas household income did not (Barrera 1990). But an interaction term of these two factors also indicated that mother's schooling appeared to attenuate the negative effects of poor community sanitation and water supply. When services were absent, better educated mothers were able to protect even very young children against

an unhealthy environment. (Children under two with less educated mothers derived the greatest benefits from externally provided services -- a cleaner community and safer water supply.)

A second pathway by which families experience the benefits of women's education for health is through reduced fertility which in turn can increase the family resources devoted to each child. One avenue through which education lowers fertility is through later marriage and delayed age at first birth.

An important intergenerational effect of women's education is that mother's education is associated with improved educational outcomes for her children. In many cases, mother's education has been found to have a larger impact on children's schooling than father's education (even though father's education may also be capturing a beneficial income effect).[4] A mother's schooling has been found to determine significantly student achievement. students' motivation, and their study habits (Jimenez and Lockheed 1989 for Thailand; Lockheed and others 1989a, 1989b for the Philippines, Thailand and Malawi).

Benefits for Society

The evidence from household level studies on the benefits of educating women is extensive. And there is rapidly expanding literature which analyzes the importance of

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[4]As in health, a few studies have found differences in the effect of father's and mother's education on the schooling of sons and daughters (see, for example, King and others 1986). A stronger effect of mother's education on daughters than on sons may be a result of a traditional sexual division of labor within families. Mothers tend to spend more time with their daughters, especially in the context of performing household work, while fathers spend more time with their sons. This disparity could also be related to culture-related differences in the preferences of mothers and fathers, as seen in their expectations about the future social roles or economic roles of sons and daughters. But given social and cultural norms, it is likely that more educated mothers are better able to influence the allocation of family resources.

education overall for economic growth.[5] Yet only recently has this work at the aggregate level begun to consider the differential effects that male and female education may have on economic growth.

Education improves social well-being by enhancing market productivity and increasing national income, which in turn raises living standards. But education also bears a relationship to measures of social well-being such as infant mortality, described in some detail above for the family, with higher mother's education resulting in improved nutrition and hygiene for her family and ultimately a higher probability of survival for her children. The household level evidence indicates that women's education can have a beneficial effect on family health, even after we account for the family's level of income. Empirical studies report that this relationship translates to an aggregate country level. Even after accounting for intercountry differences in GDP (or GDP per capita), countries with higher levels of women's education experience more rapid economic growth, longer life expectancy, lower population growth, and improved quality of life.

Several recent papers affirm the importance of incorporating female education in cross-country growth models and analysis of aggregate social indicators. Bhalla and Gill (1992) estimated equations for infant mortality and secondary school enrollment both in levels and in terms of rates of growth and include either the total educational stock or the educational stock of women as explanatory variables (along with private income, and public expenditures on health and education). They report that women's schooling appears to be one of the most important determinants of both health and schooling. Barro and Lee (1992)

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[5]See recent work by Levine and Renelt (1992) and Mankiw et al. (1992).

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included carefully constructed education stock measures for both males and females as explanatory variables in equations estimating growth rates in real per capita GDP, fertility, and secondary and tertiary school enrollment ratios. They found positive effects of female schooling in GDP growth rate but their results indicate that the beneficial effect of female schooling works primarily through fertility reduction. However, only female schooling had the expected statistically significant effects on fertility and overall secondary and tertiary school enrollment ratios.

Gill and Bhalla (1992) estimated annual income growth equations for 1960 to 1987, relating the annual rate of GDP growth to changes in the stock of education, arable land, capital and labor, as well as to initial levels of female education, male education, and per capita income. Their findings illuminate the same empirical puzzle that initially motivated the research summarized below. Although the 1960 level of female education bears the expected strong positive relationship to subsequent GDP growth, the initial level of male education does not. They found that countries with higher levels of education for men in 1960 experienced slower economic growth.

Hill and King (1993) find the level of education to have a strong positive effect on GDP. For given levels of female education, the size of a country's labor force and its capital stock, those countries in which the ratio of female to male enrollments is less than 0.75 can expect levels of GNP that are roughly 25 percent lower than in countries which are otherwise similar apart from the level of gender disparity in education. That is, large gender disparities in educational attainment are associated with lower levels of GDP. The results also indicate that both the level of female enrollments and the gender disparity in enrollments

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influence social well being, even after accounting for intercountry differences in GNP. Higher levels of primary and secondary enrollments are associated with longer life expectancy (with comparable benefits experienced by men and women), lower infant mortality, and lower total fertility rates.

What Has Been Done? Public Policy and Female Education

Experience suggests that compulsory education laws and tuition-free primary education have not been enough to equate enrollment rates between men and women and that specific gender-based interventions may be required. Success depends on how well the barriers to female enrollment are understood and addressed, how simple and affordable these programs are, and how much sustained support they receive from the government, teachers, education administrators, and communities. Bellew and King (1993) reviewed the experience in more than 25 developing countries that have implemented at least one program designed to raise female education (see table 3).[6] Most of these efforts, however, began and ended as pilot projects with short-term funding and implementation support from donor agencies and non-governmental organizations. They have rarely been an integral part of national education development plans and have rarely resulted from national policy making. Very few of the programs were subjected to evaluation; thus, information about their costs and results is limited. Although there is evidence to suggest which interventions have been successful, few clear conclusions can be drawn about the relative effectiveness of specific strategies. Implementing a mix of strategies at the same time may have a greater chance of success, but it also is likely to be more costly and more difficult to administer.

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[6]See also Herz and others (1991).

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The review of projects reveals that in some cases, a simple program of building more schools in remote rural areas or providing radio education and correspondence courses has been sufficient to raise girls' enrollment substantially. Examples are given by the positive response to an expansion of rural primary schools in Egypt between 1981 and 1987, and to the provision of feeder schools by a local NGO in Bangladesh.[7] But the success of these interventions depended on the level of demand for girls' schooling; there are cases of half-empty classrooms in settings where the enrollment rate of girls is lower than that of boys--where the total costs associated with school attendance, including out-of-pocket expenditures and opportunity costs, are too high, and the perceived benefits to formal education of girls, too low. Several programs have focused on reducing the costs of schooling, with mixed results. Providing free uniforms could have raised girls' education in Bangladesh, but administrative problems with production and distribution of the uniforms resulted in the project being abandoned after two years. A different tactic is being tried in the Sindh region of Pakistan: By abolishing the compulsory uniforms, costs are expected to be lower for families. Results remain to be seen.

Several countries have undertaken scholarship programs for girls--Bangladesh, Guatemala, India, and Nepal. The Bangladesh project is the best known because it has been formally evaluated. Established in 1982 by a local non-profit organization, it began as a pilot project in one district, and then expanded to include more than 20,000 female students

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In 1983, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee established 23 pilot schools that offered the first three years of primary education. Parents, on the basis of their work schedules, decided whether the school in their community would be open in the early morning or late afternoon. By 1988, 731 centers were operating and more than 21,000 children were enrolled. The schools which were closer to homes were successful in attracting girls, who comprised 63 percent of enrollment, and in retaining them--the dropout rate was less than one percent and 83 percent of the enrollees continued their education at the government primary schools (Mallon 1989).

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by 1988. At a cost of $45 per year per student, the project subsidized school expenses for admission and exam fees, transportation, uniforms, and books. In the project areas, female enrollment rate rose from 27 percent before the project began, a figure similar to the national average, to 44 percent in 1987 -- more than double the national average.

But alleviating the "psychic" costs to parents of sending their daughters to school may be at least as important as lowering the pecuniary costs of schooling, although empirical studies do not shed light on this. School-building programs appear to be more successful when they consider cultural standards. The Sindh project mentioned above provides for boundary walls around girls' schools and latrines; a survey of 2,000 parents in Pakistan reported that they did not mind the absence of desks and chairs in girls' schools but two-thirds objected to the absence of private sanitary facilities (Culbertson and others 1986). Anecdotal evidence suggests that parents prefer schools that have female teachers. This evidence has led to projects aimed at enlarging the pool of female teachers, at least at the primary school level, a task itself beleaguered by the same problems as getting the girls to school. Nepal launched a major program for female teachers in 1971 that is said to have increased the share of female teachers from 3 percent in 1972 to 10 percent in 1980. Three special features of this program were active recruitment through posters, newspaper announcements, and radio programs targeted at rural areas, aimed at breaking down community resistance; provision of hostel accommodations, along with a monthly stipend, travel expenses, medical care, and tutorial assistance; and a realistic admissions policy that accepted girls who had not attained the required Secondary School Leaving Certificate and prepared them for entry into the teacher training program. Likewise, Pakistan introduced a

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teacher training program that focused on recruiting girls from rural areas. The program began in the Punjab province in 1984 where the government introduced primary teacher training in units attached to local secondary schools. Its special feature was that it located the training closer to the homes of the girls, thus, weakening parental opposition and lowering costs below that of the conventional program by eliminating the need for special boarding facilities for the female trainees.

The resources that households must allocate for girls' education include not only cash outlays but also the girls' time. Allowing girls to bring younger siblings to school, establishing day-care centers for mothers at work, or introducing simple technologies that can substitute for time in fetching water or firewood can release girls' time from household work. Colombia's Hogares de Bienestar Infantil, community-based day-care centers started in 1987, have freed many older girls and women to attend school or to join the workforce. In the Ghansu province of China, girls in 20 to 30 schools are allowed to bring their younger siblings to class; China has also expanded preschools, relieving older girls from childcare during the day as well as providing younger siblings a head start in education. The introduction of fuel-efficient wood-burning stoves in Nepal was designed to reduce by 2,000 pounds of wood per year the amount that girls and women have to haul home, but it is not clear what impact this has had on girls' school attendance. In Burkina Faso, the introduction of mechanical grain mills, accessible water wells and carts for hauling wood in villages as part of a nonformal education program for women did little to raise attendance in the project areas. Instead of attending literacy classes with the time saved, women used the time for

other household work, such as preparing more elaborate meals and weaving (McSweeney and Freedman 1980).

On the side of raising the benefits to educating girls, programs are focusing on informing the community at large of the social gains from higher female education. In an ongoing education project in Mali, media campaigns are planned to advertise the value of education as an investment. In Morocco, materials that are being developed to promote girls' education will be distributed by extension workers who visit rural communities. In addition, several countries have initiated large-scale projects to revise textbooks for the purpose of improving the image of women and girls depicted in them and broadening the roles shown for women beyond the traditional ones; these countries include Bangladesh, China, India and Kenya. The impact of these different efforts, however, remains to be assessed.

Improving women's chances of attaining well-paid jobs is another way of realizing the benefits from their education. Some projects have aimed at abolishing the barriers to entry for girls and women in technical postsecondary education and training programs. The new female secondary school project in Bangladesh will support an occupational skills development program for school-leaving girls. But past efforts indicate that well-designed recruitment and counseling components are required for these programs to pay off. For example, Morocco's Office of Technical Training and Job Development initiated the Industrial and Commercial Job Training Program for Women in 1979. Young women with at least 12 years of schooling were recruited to the commercial centers for training in accounting and secretarial skills; those with 9 years of schooling were recruited to the

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industrial centers for training in drafting, electricity, and electronics. Women competed with men on the national entrance examination to be admitted; counseling for women was provided and a formal job placement service was established for graduates. A 1983 evaluation showed that completion rates were comparable for men and women, and that the employment rate of female graduates was much higher than for women in the general population with the same level of formal education but no vocational skills training (Lycette 1985, USAID 1983).

Gender-targeted education programs are not the only way by which the government can increase female education. Broader education and non-education policies matter. For example, investments to improve the quality of primary education are likely to yield greater benefits for girls than investments in higher school levels because girls are more likely to quit school after the primary cycle. Similarly, investments to increase the general availability of reading materials in rural areas are likely to improve the retention of literacy skills, especially for those women who leave school earlier than men. The delivery of family planning programs can alter the lives of young women profoundly in many countries because teen pregnancy is frequently one reason why girls drop out of secondary school. And employment policies designed to expand the opportunities of women for paid work will induce not only larger school enrollments but also better performance in school by girls.

This review emphasizes the need to improve the monitoring and evaluation of projects. Although research unrelated to specific projects has provided evidence on the benefits of educating women and on the barriers to girls' education, this research does not address the difficult practical questions that field operations face. Research that is directly

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linked to the evaluation of projects will be better able to quantify the impact of specific interventions and to examine the effectiveness of the processes by which these interventions are implemented. The importance of project evaluation should be stressed. Few of the projects reviewed clearly established baseline conditions prior to the project in the community where the project will be operating. Only a handful of projects undertook a case study to compile a list of factors that may hinder girls' education and these studies involved only small non-random samples of schools or households in one or selected communities. Surveys for the purpose of identifying specific interventions were rare. Yet unless we are willing to subject these education projects to the same scrutiny generally accorded other projects, there will be few real lessons for future efforts.

Looking Toward the Future

Girls face a diverse set of barriers to their education. These barriers arise in the home, in the educational system itself, in the labor market, and in society at large. Unfortunately, many of the benefits of educating girls and women are hidden. Larger costs and unmeasured benefits has led to a vicious cycle in education outcomes for women. Since parents make the first educational decisions, the impediments begin in the home. Any move to increase girls' education must begin there. Possibilities include:

- Make parents aware that the benefits of educating their daughters can be large.

- Reduce the direct costs of educating girls (e.g., through scholarships)

- Reduce the opportunity costs of educating girls (e.g., by allowing sibling care at school)

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- Reduce the psychic costs of educating girls (e.g., through single sex schools, more female teachers)

The labor market restrictions that women face limit the monetary benefits to their education. Sex discrimination in the labor market is illegal in many countries, but remains widespread. The benefits to education could be raised by:

- Make illegal sex discrimination in hiring, promotion, and remuneration. Provide means for enforcing existing laws.

Finally, combined with a public information campaign to educate parents about the benefits of educating their daughters, a campaign should be waged to ensure that policy makers are aware of the social benefits of educating women.

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Table 1. Average Years of Primary and Secondary Education for Males and Females Ages 15-24, By Region, 1960-87

Region (number of countries) and Year	Females	Males	Female/Male Ratio
OECD countries (21)			
1960	8.1	8.8	0.90
1970	8.5	8.9	0.91
1980	9.4	9.8	0.96
1987	10.3	10.5	0.98
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	1.0	0.7	
Sub Saharan Africa (22)			
1960	0.5	1.7	0.29
1970	1.2	2.8	0.43
1980	2.2	3.7	0.59
1987	3.2	4.9	0.65
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	20.0	7.0	
Middle East and North Africa (10)			
1960	1.2	2.8	0.43
1970	2.3	4.3	0.53
1980	4.1	6.4	0.64
1987	5.6	7.5	0.75
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	13.6	6.2	
East Asia & Pacific (8)			
1960	1.5	3.6	0.42
1970	3.1	6.2	0.50
1980	5.0	8.0	0.62
1987	5.6	8.1	0.69
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	10.1	4.6	

Table 1. continued

Region (number of countries) and Year	Females	Males	Female/Male Ratio
South Asia (4)			
1960	0.8	2.5	0.32
1970	2.0	4.2	0.48
1980	3.1	5.5	0.56
1987	3.6	6.2	0.58
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	13.0	5.5	
Latin American & the Carribbean (19)			
1960	3.1	4.1	0.76
1970	4.1	4.5	0.91
1980	5.4	5.6	0.96
1987	7.0	7.1	0.99
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	4.6	2.7	
Developing Countries (63)			
1960	1.4	3.1	0.45
1970	2.7	5.0	0.54
1980	4.2	6.6	0.64
1987	5.0	7.1	0.70
Average Annual Growth 1960-87 (%)	9.5	4.8	

Source: Adapted from Dubey and King (1994), Tables 1 and 2.

Table 2. Differences in the Market and Household Time Spent by Girls Relative to Boys

Author(s) and Location of Study, Definition of Work and Time Dimension Used	*Age Group*		
Nag and others (1980)			
Home and Market Production			
Hours per day	*6 to 8*	*9 to 11*	*12 to 14*
Javanese Village	0.97	1.74	1.85
Nepalese Village	1.32	1.29	1.36
de Tray (1983)			
Peninsular Malaysia			
Home and Market Production			
Annual Participation Rates	*5 to 6*	*7 to 9*	*10 to 14*
Malays	1.82	1.17	1.10
Chinese	2.50	1.78	1.31
Indians	2.18	1.79	1.35
Average Weekly Hours if Working			
Malays	1.21	1.74	1.75
Chinese	1.00	2.19	1.35
Indians	1.76	2.49	1.80
Cabañero (1977) as cited in Evenson and others (1980)			
Philippines			
Average Annual Hours of Home and Market Production	*6 to 8*	*9 to 11*	*12 to 14*
	0.93	1.49	1.02
King and Bellew (1989)			
Peru			
Participation Rates	*5 to 7*	*8 to 10*	*11 to 13*
In School Youths	0.56	0.89	0.88
Out of School Youths	1.07	1.03	1.14

Source: Adapted from Hill and King (1993).

Table 3. Some Interventions to Raise Female Enrollment

Past Approaches	Country	Description of interventions reviewed	Year began
Increase school supply	Bhutan	Built "extended" primary school classrooms in rural areas (World Bank funding)	1988
	Egypt	Built primary schools in rural areas	1981
	Mali	Build and renovate school buildings	1989a/
	Yemen	Established vocational centers for women	1987
Build appropriate school facilities	Bangladesh	Built primary schools and teacher training centers	1985
	Mali	Provided community schools with pedagogic support; in new WB project, medersas also to receive pedagogic materials	1989a/
	Kenya	Secularized curricula in Koranic schools to attract more students	1985
	Pakistan	Secularized curricula in mosques	1979
		Provided sanitation and water facilities in schools and build boundary walls (Sindh)	1990a/
Recruit female teachers	Nepal	Trained rural females with secondary education as school teachers; those without were trained to qualify	1971
	Pakistan	Recruited female teachers in rural areas and trained them there; provided female teacher residences	1984
	Somalia	Established teacher incentive systems	1975
	Yemen	Built separate urban primary teacher training institutes for women, and pilot institutes in rural areas to attract rural women	1987
Lower cost of uniforms	Bangladesh	Distributed free uniforms to primary girls	1981
	Pakistan	Abolished required uniforms in rural areas	1990a/
Provide scholarships	Bangladesh	Offered scholarships to girls in secondary schools (USAID funding until 1988; World Bank)	1982
	Guatemala	Offered scholarships to girls in primary grades (USAID pilot funding; future World Bank funding)	1987
	India	Offered scholarships to girls in primary school (government funding)	
	Nepal	Offered scholarships to girls in primary school (government funding)	Early 80s
Establish day-care centers	China	Established worksite day-care centers and preschool centers, and sibling care at primary schools	Mid-80s
	Colombia	Built community-based centers ("Hogares de Bienestar Infantil")	1987

Table 3. Some Interventions to Raise Female Enrollment
...continued

Past Approaches	Country	Description of interventions reviewed	Year began
Adapt labor-saving home technologies	Burkina Faso	Distributed labor-saving machines to encourage nonformal education of women (UNESCO sponsored)	1967
	Nepal	Disseminated fuel efficient stoves	1977
Design flexible school schedules	Bangladesh	Introduced programmed instruction in selected rural schools	1980
	Colombia	Programmed learning in "escuelas nuevas"	1975
	El Salvador	Introduced program instruction	Late 80s
	Indonesia	Introduced multigrade teaching	Late 70s-
	Liberia	using self-taught learning materials	early 80s
	Philippines	taught learning materials	
Build safety nets	Bangladesh	Built lower primary schools in rural areas; known as BRAC schools (funded by UNESCO and Norway)	1983
	India	Established nonformal evening schools for out-of-school youths (supported by government and UNICEF)	1979
Promote gender-neutral instruction	Bangladesh	Revised textbooks to improve perception of women's roles in family and society	1988
	China		
	India	Same as above	1980s
	Kenya		
Educating community	Mali	Launched media campaigns to advertise value of education of girls	1989a/
	Morocco	Developed materials and extension service promoting girls' education	1989a/
Delay childbearing	Guatemala	Used girls' scholarship program to reward avoidance of pregnancy	1987
Improve girls' nutrition	Jamaica	Provided school breakfast program	
Offer training in non-traditional occupations	Chile	Built vocational centers to train middle-level male and female technicians	1968
	Morocco	Established industrial and commercial training program for men and women	1979
	Tanzania	Established training centers near primary schools for unemployed females	1975
	Yemen	Built vocational training centers	1987
Alleviate poverty	Bangladesh	Established women's income-earning programs	1970s

Note: a/ Although the project has been launched, the specific intervention pertaining to girls or women may not have started yet.

Source: Bellew and King (1993).

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Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training
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GENDER AND EDUCATION:

Critical Areas of Concern and Strategic Objectives

Responses to the Draft Platform For Action

prepared by*

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*   The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are
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It is appropriate that the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 will consider the education of girls and women as one major topic. This is in recognition of education as a key to and determinant of development. Education is also first and foremost recognized as a basic human right. Yet 70 percent of all missing school children are female. Another reason for concern is that the optimism created by the Jomtien World Conference on Education For All (1990) and the World Summit For Children (1990) on the ability to achieve EFA and to achieve gender equity in education appears to have gradually waned, at least in Africa. Recent monitoring efforts indicate that while progress is visible in other regions, EFA is in a state of decline in Africa while the political will for its achievement appears to be lacking.

African ministries of education and senior policy makers meeting recently in Mauritius resolved that economic and social constraints should no longer be made excuses for inaction. This paper is monotonous in the way it reiterates the need for unapologetic affirmative action.

2. Main Obstacles to Girls' Education

Cost has been identified as a major obstacle affecting enrolment and retention. The economic hardships facing many countries of Africa, the rising cost of providing education and the new emphasis on increased cost-sharing, now that many governments are unable to provide free education, all contribute to this situation. Girls in Africa participate more than boys in the household economy. The opportunity cost of sending them to school is, therefore, higher for girls than for boys. School systems in Africa have as yet to adopt flexible schedules (e.g. BRAC) that take into account this reality. Absenteeism is more frequent for girls than for boys. Most parents in Africa expect daughters to get married and move away from their families to their marital home. Any benefits of female education are therefore seen to belong elsewhere. Preference for sons is another factor influencing parental decision-making on who to send to school if a choice has to be made. In many African cultures, the son is expected not only to maintain the family line but also to support his elderly parents. The latter is more of a myth than a reflection of modern reality.

Socialization towards marriage and withdrawal for early marriage are factors hindering girls' participation in those areas dominated by pastoralists, moslems (in Kenya). Adolescent pregnancy affects girls in the last two years of primary school. Most countries in Africa have policies of exclusion for school drop-outs due to pregnancy.

Distance to and travel to school which raises the problem of safety generally and sexual safety in particular. The absence of female teachers in some areas contributes to lack of role models and low motivation among girls. Added to gender stereotypes in school textbooks and discouraging attitudes from gender insensitive teachers, girls perform poorly and are made to repeat classes (Kenya) which can also lead to dropping-out.

The age of enrolment is another factor that affects girls (Tanzania, Zambia) where girls may reach puberty while they are still in lower primary school.

3. Strategies for Improving Girls' Participation in Education

The multiple obstacles to girls' education demand multiple approaches and multi-faceted strategies in order to address several actors simultaneously, for the

greatest impact.

(a) The foremost need is that of garnering political commitment for the achievement of EFA. This would lead not only to a deliberate shift of resources to benefit EFA (especially basic education) and girls, but also to unapologetic affirmative action throughout the education system. It is clear that there are countries within Africa that can achieve the target of 70% coverage of first four years of school.

The often cited historical disadvantage for females cannot be overcome without deliberate efforts to favour girls and women just like colonial systems of education in Africa favoured boys and men. Affirmative action is necessary to wipe out persistent gender disparities in allocation of resources, access training programmes, provision of adequate, appropriate and convenient facilities and equipment, provision of bursaries and scholarships etc. System-wide, there is need for policy changes towards clear-cut, deliberate gender sensitive policies, affirmative action for targeted elimination of gender disparities e.g. flexibility in organization of school to respond to specific socio-economic needs of local communities and curriculum change/revision for gender sensitivity and relevance. Increase in the number of female teachers added to gender sensitization of all teacher training will provide for role models and to an empowering school culture and environment.

(b) It is becoming increasingly clear that the social sectors especially education and health should be excluded from the current implementation of Structural Adjustment Programmes. This is because of the contradictions arising from the need to provide affordable Education For All while at the same time expecting an increased contribution from parents. It is important that adequate and timely monitoring be undertaken on the impact of SAPS on girls' education.

Resource allocation decisions for consideration include:

- total allocation to education within the national budget to reflect education as a tool for achievement in all other sectors;

- ensuring that new resources are allocated proportionately to eliminate past gender disparities, e.g. in provision of places and essential equipment for girls;

- ensuring increases in teacher training for females in all subjects of the curriculum and the deployment of qualified teachers, especially women to all institutions with female students.

- mobilizing for increases in and influencing donor/external and NGO resources in favour of female education.

(c) Among the innovative and cost-effective strategies for increasing access are:

(i) Parental and community mobilization so that they become custodians of their daughters'/children's education - their own watch-dog. FAWE is supporting the process of designing an effective multi-media advocacy and public education programme in Ghana. Public mobilization has been achieved for other causes, e.g. immunization,

family planning, membership of political parties etc. The same can be done for girls' education.

(ii) BRAC is a good example of a programme targeting girls and going out of its way not only to include them (70%) but also to adjust in response to their specific socio-economic roles. African systems of education need to be flexible, especially in low participation areas, and take into account the socio-economic roles of girls.

(iii) Provision of boarding schools for girls especially at secondary level for a conducive environment for learning and achievement. There is need to ensure that existing boarding schools are used to cater for the needs of deserving and at-risk girls with regard to poverty, sexual safety, distance and parental motivation.

(iv) Bridging and counselling programmes have been tried out especially with regard to girls' participation in Maths and Science - (Ghana Science Clinics, Botswana Road Show, Kenya Science Congress etc.)

(v) A number of NGOs have demonstrated the value of alternative education programmes for female school drop-outs especially those due to pregnancy. Such programmes facilitate re-entry into the formal system where official policies are not exclusivist, continuing education and skill development for linkage with employment - (UMATI - Tanzania, Shelter - Zimbabwe, YWCA -Botswana etc.) Unfortunately, the success of some of these projects never seem to find their way into official policies or plans for mainstream education.

(vi) Gender training and sensitization is proving to be an important area needing greater emphasis if education is to become a female empowerment tool. FAWE, and FEMNET are spearheading the gender sensitization of the curriculum, including teaching training in Africa.

(vii) Streaming of girls in areas where they are weak is important in Africa where girls are socialized away from competition with boys. In Kenya, single-sex girls' secondary schools provide for better performance by girls as opposed to mixed schools. Cost-effectiveness should, therefore, not always be measured in terms of money invested but more on the benefits reaped out of any investments.

(viii) Commuunity and parental involvement in educational programmes and projects ensures their sustained interest as stakeholders. The success of Kenya's self-help movement that permeated all development sectors in the 1960s and 1970s was more evident in education where parents and communities assumed ownership of schools. Currently, there is a movement towards deliberate separation of girls and boys at the secondary school level with parents assuming responsibility for such separation.

(ix) Involvement of girls in decision-making to determine what and how they should learn, has proved useful, even within the confines of existing syllabi. Such involvement demands reorientation and

gender sensitization of teacher training programmes.

(x) Supportive services include day-care and labour-saving technologies that free young girls for attending classes.

(d) In the recent past, there has been too much talk of "popular participation" and too little of actual, deliberate involvement of the people, target group, beneficiaries in the consultative process and especially in decision-making.

(i) Interviews with successful school heads reveal that a healthy school environment is one in which the learners and their parents participate in crucial aspects of management including decision-making, even in the formulation of rules. Such democratization of management of education ensures that students' problems are diagnosed earlier and dealt with in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. FAWE has established that it matters a great deal who heads an educational institution and her relationship with students, parents and communities.

(ii) Africa has a history of parental neglect by education systems based on the assumption that illiterate parents cannot have anything to contribute to the formal school. Even where such parents are involved, involvement is limited to fundraising rather than for providing validity to or consensus on desirable and relevant education goals, content and strategies. Somehow, a way has to be found of eliminating or at least reducing the arrogance of the school towards uneducated parents. These are the same people who have to be convinced about sending their daughters to school, yet the school behaves in a contemptuous manner towards them. Meaningful involvement of parents and communities demands deliberate efforts by education authorities especially teachers to interact with parents so as to gain their confidence in realization of the fact that interventions for girls' participation in education are largely rooted in the family.

A school/parent partnership is, therefore, vital for improved female participation.

(iii) Deliberate mobilization of parents and communities requires the utilization of a multi-media strategy for public information on the value of girls' education. Adult literacy classes and other on-going programmes targeting adults, especially mothers, are appropriate tools for information dissemination and for demonstration of benefits derived from female education.

(e) There appears to be a direct link between the involvement of women leaders in education decision-making and in community and national leadership and improved participation by girls. This is because such women act as role models worth emulating by school girls. They also shape the attitudes of local communities through new perception of gender roles. Women leaders are also more likely to be gender sensitive in responding to the needs of girls than their male counterparts. Gender sensitivity should, however, never be taken for granted as gender blind females are capable of doing more harm than their male counterparts. I have found women to be more conservative than men on the issue of re-

entry policies for girls who dropped out of school due to pregnancy.

Professional women's groups (e.g. Young Career Women in Kenya and Uganda Association of University Women) undertake effective career guidance and counselling for girls in school.

Women's groups in Kenya have been instrumental in ensuring survival of children, especially girls in the education system. This is because of their capacity to use income-generating activities and/or revolving funds to meet the cost of educating their members' children.

Here again affirmative action ensures the deliberate involvement of women and their representation in decision-making bodies. The opinions of women should be sought within their groups and organizations.

(f) With regard to educational quality, affirmative action in resource allocation to ensure equitable provision of equipment and facilities, including qualified teachers, is a most desirable goal. Gender sensitivity is currently a misunderstood concept which calls for seriousness in addressing gender issues in education and elimination of gender typing.

4. Strategies for Increasing Motivation and for Providing Basic Literacy and Technical Training

(a) Reduction of cost and where possible provision of free education increases parental motivation for educating girls. Provision of scholarships/bursaries (already cited) and reduction of cost (uniform, text-books and activity fees) have been tried out successfully by NGOs in low participation areas.

(b) A national curriculum needs to be translated into locally relevant activities in order to emphasize the link between school and reality. Teacher training programmes do not always ensure capacity of teachers to do this and to incorporate extra-curricula activities that link school with community and home experience.

(c) Vocational training and skill development programmes should equip girls with relevant and marketable skills for income generation. Many skill development programmes for girls teach stereotype courses for which the market is saturated, e.g. dressmaking.

(d) Flexibility of time-tabling in education and training programmes to take into account seasonal activities and opportunity costs of female education including literacy programmes has proved to be a major motivating factor. The venue and timing of literacy activities is a major cause of failure in many countries.

(e) Gender sensitization programmes at various levels - public, parents, teachers, girls and boys accompanied by exposure to appropriate role models provides for increased motivation.

(f) National mass media combined with traditional and popular media have been successfully used for achievement motivational goals in population programmes.

(g)   Due respect for and official recognition (including support) of non-formal education programmes are called for especially in countries with high enrolment rates in formal education. Alternative education programmes catering for unenrolled and over-age children often have no link with the formal system. In some countries these activities belong to other ministries, not education, which makes linkage difficult or impossible. Ghana has promoted non-formal education as an integral part of the national education system.

(h)   Link between literacy programmes and income generation activities has been found to be a contributor to higher revenues/profits (Kenya). Involvement of learners in the design of curriculum ensures such are relevant and determines the functionality of what is learnt/taught.

5.   Methods for Improving the Quality of Female Education

(a)   The first priority is to have a gender sensitive education policy. This demonstrates government commitment and that of other agencies involved in education towards the achievement of gender equity. Such policy requires a gender screen and effective mechanisms (e.g. Gender Task Force - Kenya) for monitoring implementation and impact with regard to access, survival, achievement, training, curriculum content and gender sensitivity, provision of equipment and facilities etc. Incentives for achievement, e.g. awards/prizes, scholarships etc. also encourage improved performance.

   ■   Sustained collection, review and analysis of gender data in education and its use for policy reform and planning.

   ■   Identification of innovation in girls' education and its dissemination and replication on a wider scale.

   ■   Gender sensitization of all those involved in the education process to ensure sustained attention to constraints facing girls in education.

(b)   Effective strategies include affirmative action to redress historical and social disadvantage. The quota system is frequently applied to overcome disparities in Africa based on a variety of criteria, in the short term. The quota applies to entry criteria, allocation of bursaries/scholarships, provision of facilities and equipment. If the quest for gender equity is genuine, then affirmative action is justified.

Increase in the number of women teachers and their involvement in counselling and education management has significant impact. Streaming girls, single sex schools and well managed boarding schools often have positive impact on quality of performance.

(c)   Positive and sustained political commitment involves willingness to constantly review official policies and sustained monitoring of their implementation; deliberate increase in budgetary provision; visible mobilization of all relevant partnerships for increased contributions; enactment of necessary legislation of age of consent and marriage; establishment of gender screen for official policies, curriculum materials, training programmes an management of education.

(d) The power for positive change (driving force) rests with the leadership in each country. In FAWE, we believe that ministers of education must provide the momentum for the changes necessary. Their empowerment is nevertheless vital to enable them to initiate policy dialogue, convince their colleagues in decision-making, influence the flow of resources into education, establish the necessary implementation and monitoring structures, recognize the need for and be willing to mobilize partnerships and at all times assume accountability for what happens or does not happen to girls' education. Ministers need the support of pressure groups, e.g. women's organizations, NGOs and donors.

Availability of ~~reserves~~ resources for effecting increased access and quality is another driving force that must be tackled both internally and externally. The impact of SAPS on education has to be contained through clear understanding both internally and externally that of the catalytic role of education in development. Education must, therefore, not be compromised under any circumstances.

(e) Gender sensitization of policy makers, mobilization of resources including maximization in utilization of available resources and innovative shift of resources (e.g. debt swapping, military expenditure and increased private sector contribution), exclusion of education from SAPS, and cautious gender-sensitive introduction of cost sharing are some strategies for influencing the "driving force". Increased entry by women into decision-making positions, strengthening the capacities of NGOs including women's organizations, and empowering parents and communities for demanding education for their children are important components for change.

(f) Strategies for addressing existing discrepancies must include affirmative action for involving women in decision-making and education-planning, making education more responsive to the needs and responsibilities of girls and women, and ensuring education relevance. Flexible time-tabling, involvement of parents, provision of supportive services of child care, appropriate technologies and proper coordination of extension services to take consideration of the multiple roles of women and their time constraints will facilitate the ability of girls and women to take advantage of educational programmes.

6. **Priority Measures for Addressing the Needs of the 12-25 Age Cohort**

(a) Baseline data collection to establish who they are and where they are (poor, mothers, married, drop-out and at what level, employed/unemployed) etc.

(b) Baseline data creation to establish who and where they are (status) - poor, drop-out - at what level and why, employed/unemployed, mothers, married, etc. and their articulated needs for education and skill development.

(c) Their involvement and that of their parents and communities in the design of appropriate non-formal education programmes and creation of an essential linkage between such programmes with formal education, existing skill development and income earning opportunities.

(d) Advocacy and "relief operation" for girls who have never enrolled, have

no possibility of enrolling in the conventional school or are at risk of dropping out.

(e)   Policy review and change on re-entry of drop-outs accompanied by clear mechanisms for facilitating such re-entry.

(f)   Empowering education protection and supportive services for adolescents, disabled girls, street girls and other disadvantaged groups, with particular reference to sexual abuse and harassment and fertility management.

7.   In conclusion, we underline the need for deliberate, special measures for overcoming gender disparities in education. This is an issue that cannot be left to solve itself through the natural process. Affirmative action is an essential component of this deliberate process. Gender neutral approaches are not likely to achieve gender equity in education for a long time to come.

THE 21st CENTURY PRIORITY :

Girls' Primary Education

prepared by*

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*   The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

May A. Rihani   October 1994

The 21st Century Priority:

Girls' Primary Education

This position paper is focused on the most important priority in education -- girls primary education. It is divided into five sections:

I   The Education Paradigm

Children's participation in schools is the result of two variables: **supply** and **demand**. Supply elements, which include such things as number of schools, number of places available in particular schools, number of teachers, and number of textbooks must be in place so that instruction can be provided. While supply factors are necessary conditions they are not always sufficient to provide educational opportunity. Although parents are more reluctant to send their children to school if there are neither materials nor adequate numbers of teachers, other factors affect the demand and desire for education. Parents' decisions to invest in schooling depend on their conception and/or understanding and calculation of the private rate of return of education. Parents assess whether the benefits to the daughter and the family outweigh the costs.

Household and family structure, societal characteristics, and cultural beliefs as well as the economic status of the family, influence the demand for education.

Supply, i.e., compulsory education and available school places, provide the opportunity for participation. Demand, i.e., parent and, to a lesser extent, student desire, ultimately determine whether a girl will enroll, attend, remain, and excel in school.

Educational barriers also relate to either supply or demand. Historically, it was assumed that because schooling was a social good, once supply was established, **all** parents would send **all** their children to schools. Issues around the nature of supply, e.g., more female teachers, were not fully analyzed to assess their impact on demand and their relationship to educational barriers.

It is important to note that supply and demand factors cannot be isolated from each other. The interaction between the set of factors influencing supply and the set influencing demand determines the degree of girls' participation in schools. As research indicates, the greatest success in reducing gender disparities in education happens in those countries where the political will for change at the very top level of government (a supply factor) is matched by the desire of parents and communities to send and keep their children in schools (a demand factor).

II   Main Constraints

The main constraints to girls' education can be organized into four categories: (a) economic, (b) cultural and social, (c) political, and (d) educational.

A. Economic Constraints

- Direct Costs: School expenses, such as tuition, uniforms, transportation, textbooks, materials, and other related costs, discourage parents from sending and/or keeping their daughters in school.

- Opportunity Costs: The loss of girls' free labor from agricultural fields, informal economy, and domestic duties, deters parents from sending and/or keeping their daughters in school.

- Lack of Credit: The unavailability or inaccessibility of credit sources to poor and remote communities discourages parents and further limits their view of the usefulness of education.

B. Cultural and Social Constraints

- <u>Acceptance</u>: In many cultures, families and communities, specifically rural ones, do not value the importance of education for girls for its own sake. The acceptance of education for its own sake is further hampered by poor educational quality.

- <u>Norms and Traditions</u>: Often, norms and traditions do not allow girls to walk long distances, especially alone or after dark, which has the effect of proscribing girls' attendance in schools. The issue is further complicated in certain communities when girls reach puberty and social norms restrict their mobility and social interaction.

- <u>Age of Marriage</u>: In many communities, age of marriage becomes a factor in the retention of girls in schools. Marriageability of girls at an early age is important in several cultures and takes priority over keeping girls in school.

- <u>Low Status of Women</u>: Women have limited involvement in national, community, and family decisions, and rarely have a role in setting policy -- even in areas that directly affect them. The recent ICPD in Cairo illustrates the controversy that surrounds the status of women and the distance we have yet to go in addressing inequities. Male decision makers may not fully value equity educational issues. Limited female educational participation and persistence contribute to an inter-generational cycle of female illiteracy that is hard to break.

C. Political Constraints

- <u>Political Will</u>: Political visions, priorities, and approaches often determine the direction and purpose of educational systems. In addition, the political environment impacts educational systems in a fundamental way. In many countries, even when written policies mandate equality between girls and boys, complete commitment to educational equity remains unfulfilled.

- <u>Financial Allocations</u>: Ministries of education often allocate a greater percentage of their budget to tertiary rather than primary education. In addition, minimal resources are allocated to implement strategies that address educational inequities.

- <u>Coordination between Public and Private Sectors</u>: Universal primary education is hard to achieve without a political will and political action that translates itself into full coordination among the different public and private sector agencies.

D. Educational Constraints

- Provision of Educational Supplies: The absence or scarcity of schools, spaces within schools, teachers, textbooks, materials, and equipment can contribute to lower girls enrollment and persistence. This is due to the fact that girls are the first to be denied education or to be withdrawn from classes.

- Distance to Schools: Research shows that the further the distance between a school and a community, the lower the rate of girls participation and persistence. Girls tend to drop out of school at a significantly higher rate than boys when schools are outside their immediate communities.

- Female Teachers: The absence or scarcity of female teachers is also a major constraint to girls' education, particularly at the secondary level.

- Quality of Education: Outdated teaching methodologies where the teaching/learning process is restricted to large group lectures and rote memorization impact negatively on students in general and girls in particular.

- Relevance of Curricula: Content of the curricula are often irrelevant to today's needs and in particular to girls' and women's **roles** and **aspirations**. Too often, curricula neglect pressing health, nutrition, survival, environmental, and vocational issues.

- Administrative Structure: Most educational systems are very centralized, with major decisions being made by a few key leaders. Parents, local teachers, and community members have little influence over educational planning, decision making, and administration.

III Benefits of Girls' Primary Education

Girls' education at the primary level yields numerous benefits including higher levels of economic productivity, decreased infant mortality, improved family health care and nutrition, later marriages, smaller families, and lower birth rates. The benefits grow as the amount of girls' education increases. Data from the developing world conclude that the returns on investing in the primary education of girls are greater than the returns on the same amount of investment in boys' education.

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The following are some representative examples of the impact of girls education on the socio-economic context:

Health and Nutrition:

- Each added year of schooling for a mother results in a 5-10 percent decrease in infant mortality.

- Educated women seek health care for sick children earlier, more often, and to greater effect than illiterate women. Educated women are less fearful of basic health-care clinics and modern procedures, and are also capable of reading and interpreting basic health instructions.

- Children of educated mothers have a greater growth potential. Statistics indicate that these children measure two standard deviations above the norm of their age groups.

- Educated women have lower rates of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

Population and Family Planning

- Research has proven that a mother with no schooling will have an average of 7 children, while a mother who has completed primary education cycle will have an average of 5 children.

- Higher female enrollment in secondary schools correlates positively with reduced birth rates. For example, in Brazil, uneducated women have an average of 6.5 children while women with some secondary education average 2.5 children.

- Educated girls have lower rates of teen pregnancy and postpone marriage longer than uneducated girls.

- An educated woman is more likely to space her children.

Economy

- Educated girls and women have higher income potential than those who have had no schooling.

- Maternal income has a greater beneficial effect on children than paternal income. The greatest percentage of maternal income is spent on family needs, such as nutrition,

rather than on the mother's personal needs. A smaller percentage of paternal income is spent on family needs.

- Households headed by educated women have a higher income than households headed by uneducated women.

- Agricultural productivity gain due to education is greater for women than for men. One study concluded that farm productivity increased by 7.4 percent as a result of 4 additional years of primary education for women farmers.

- Educated women are considered to be better credit risks than uneducated women as educated women can understand contracts and perform arithmetic. They are therefore apt to launch and maintain small businesses.

Inter-Generational Education

- Educated mothers are more likely to send both girls and boys to school and to keep them longer in school.

- A mother's education has a greater impact on children's schooling than a father's education. In Ghana, maternal education was found to be the main influence on children's education with the effect on girls being twice as strong as the effect on boys.

- The more educated and literate a woman, the more successful are the attempts to expand and improve general basic education.

Development Sustainability

- Educated girls and women are more likely to understand and participate in other development initiatives such as environmental awareness, hygiene, sanitation, and agricultural improvements.

- Educated women are more able to understand, support, and participate in, social, economic, and political systems.

IV   Approaches to Participatory Processes

The studies of the past decade have proven that greater participation of parents, local teachers, local administrators, and community leaders increases the access, retention, and achievement of both girls and boys in primary school. In addition, studies indicate that this increased participation impacts positively on the quality of education as a result of greater accountability of teachers and administrative staff to their communities.

To increase the involvement of parents and communities in primary education systems, the following are some recommended approaches.

- Social Mobilization: Mobilizing local communities to create awareness of the benefits of schooling usually results in greater enrollment and persistence of children in general, and girls in particular, in primary education.

- Community Involvement: The greater the involvement of the community in the full cycle of educating their children -- i.e., decisions about building a school, location of the school, hiring local teachers, relevance of the curriculum, creation of a parent-teacher association -- the higher the rate of participation of the children in school.

- Information Dissemination: National, regional, and local information campaigns can be used to inform and convince the public -- especially parents -- of the importance of girls' education and of its benefits to the individual, the family, and society at large. Mass media as well as other communication approaches such as theater for development could be used to disseminate information.

- NGO Participation: Motivation concerning girls' education cannot be the responsibility of ministries of education alone. Other agencies, such as NGOs, women's groups, teachers' associations, local community groups, and religious organizations -- can play a major role in increasing participation in, and commitment to, primary education in general and girls' education in particular.

V   Strategies to Improve Access, Retention, and Achievement

In recent years, it has been found to be universally true that success in education has come from simultaneous implementation of a number of interventions and strategies in an integrated "package deal" that addresses a combination of supply and demand factors. Adoption of only one or two measures has not always been effective. Most important is an overall approach that considers the persistent constraints and tailors programs to respond to the specificity of the conditions of each context.

The following strategies have been proven successful when instituted as part of an overall package, but not all are appropriate for every country or cultural setting. The strategies are organized into five categories:

A. Strategies that create a political climate and a supportive environment responsive to priorities needed to improve girls' education

Positive political motivation and public policy measures are critical to the success of any educational intervention. A national commitment to **education for all** must exist as part of the political climate. Political motivation concerning girls' education cannot be the responsibility of ministries of education alone. Other government ministries, religious groups, NGOs, parent and community groups, traditional leaders, and the private sector should be sensitized, and given responsibilities for the implementation of educational strategies.

B. Strategies that enhance the physical environment

Planning the construction of schools should be based on school mapping research that identifies unreached populations. Constructing more schools, even if they are smaller than regular schools, is an approach that is having success in such countries as Egypt, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. These schools address such problems as distance between communities and school, and facilitate access to local teachers.

The provision of separate schools for girls, or creating separate shifts at the same facility, is another strategy that eases parental concern and removes a barrier to girls' education.

Improvement of educational facilities by building separate latrines, digging school wells, assuring girls' privacy and safety, and establishing school-based first-aid stations, are relatively inexpensive initiatives that can encourage the enrollment of girls and the retention of female teachers.

C. Strategies that ease the economic burden

The reduction of cost to families might prove to be a key strategy. Reduction of school fees and tuition, provision of free or rented textbooks, scholarship for girls, and school-provided meals, are a few incentive measures to be investigated by policy makers. Providing scholarships to girls has been a successful approach in a number of countries, including Guatemala and Bangladesh.

D. Strategies that improve the teaching/learning process

In virtually all countries, the learning environment needs improvement. Because parents are often doubtful about the value of educating their girls, the quality and relevance of curricula are important considerations. The curricula of many countries should be assessed and modified to focus on national economic essentials, to promote gender equity, and to foster critical thinking. The availability and relevance of textbooks and learning materials are crucial.

Teachers' attitudes toward, and interaction with, girls are critical but difficult to measure as variables in the retention of girls in schools. Both pre-service and in-service teacher training should include instruction on removing gender bias from the teaching process.

* * *

The concepts raised in this paper summarize the issues surrounding girls' primary education. Further studies as well as a compilation of lessons learned from past experiences are needed to advance our knowledge base.

GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

the Thai Perspective

prepared by*

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*   The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

Opportunity in Education and Training

Rationale for Women's Education

Development of quality human beings should be accorded a top priority as they are invaluable asset in national development. Why women? Because half of the population is women so they should be equally developed through educational means to bring about the people's potential, so that a concerted effort can be made towards developmental goals of the country.

Many studies from various countries confirm that education of women has beneficial effects on family, especially in rearing their children, family health and nutrition, and educational attainment and achievement. Another important point is that education of women can contribute, in economic terms, i.e., monetary returns to themselves, their families and to the country as a whole as they constitute the major part of the labor force, and non-monetary return as well to the society at large

As for Thailand, the Thai economy has grown rapidly over the period 1987-1991, with an average annual growth of GDP at over 10% and slightly decreased to about 8% during the last two years. The per capita income has increased from 21,000 Baht (1$US equals 26 Baht) in 1986 to 41,000 Baht in 1991. The structure of the Thai economy has become more industrialized and export-oriented. Industry, construction and services have grown the fastest. However, still 70% of the population are in the agricultural sector where 56% of all employed women work. As a result of export-oriented policy, women have become workers in the light industries such as electronics, garments, food

processing, leatherware and footware. Women constitute over 70% of the workers in each of these industries. These industries have greatly contributed to GDP of the country. Yet, female workers have not fairly been recognized of their contributions. Moreover, monetary as well as non-monetary benefits to women are not even, such as lower wages, fewer opportunities for educational and technical and limited access to technology and dim prospect for promotion

Along with the rapid economic growth of the country as a whole, the imbalanced income gaps among economic groups, regions and between urban and rural areas are widening. More people migrate from rural areas to big cities. They leave the old and children at home. More women take the opportunity to enter the labor market as paid employees.

In the midst of rapid economic growth, social changes including political reform and the challenges for women to actively participate in societal development are especially important. More basic education is to be extended to all female population as well as more opportunity opens to women to have access to other non-female traditional fields of study at higher education, including technical education. Having access to higher education would enhance women to cope with changes in the society and to play constructive roles as contributors in the economic, social and political development of the country.

Opportunity in Education and Training

Since primary education was proclaimed compulsory for all school going Thais, the numbers of female students have risen dramatically. At present, the

proportion of male and female students at primary level are roughly equal, i.e., 51% for females and 49% for males. However, when enrollment ratio is examined, 6-11 male age-group outnumber their counterpart by 3%. Disparity of gender access to schooling by geographical regions ranges from 1-3%.

With the advent of the public policy to raise educational attainment level of its population, the Thai government has introduced 9-year basic education for all which comprises 6 years of primary education and 3 years of secondary education. The attempt is successful to a certain extent as 6th graders go on to first year of secondary education by 76.5% rising from 41.3% in 1987. However, promotion rate for females is marginally lower than that for males. At upper secondary level, male and female promotion rates are almost equal. At this level, students are streamed according to their choices and academic achievements. It should be noted that in the general stream female students outnumber males(54% : 46%). But the reverse is true in the vocational stream, i.e.,(45% : 55%). A more scrutiny look reveals gender biased options. Females tend to choose home economics, commercial and dramatic arts. In agriculture and industry, females are disproportionately represented, that is 23.9 and 2.4% respectively. This pattern of choice indeed reflects conventional and ascribed career paths for men and women. As an agricultural-based country with over 70% of the population working on farm of which half are women, very few women are interested in entering agricultural education at college level.

At tertiary level, last 3 years statistics show that the numbers of female students are greater than male students in Teacher Training Colleges, public and private universities excluding open ones. Places in universities are highly competitive. One of the determining factors is personal capability. There are 2

gender related concerns, i.e., choice of preference and managed/manipulated choice. Among the faculties that are favored by women are humanities, medical science and health science, education and social sciences. On the other hand, women's representation in engineering, law, and agriculture is fairly low, i.e., they form 11%, 17% and 33% of the student faculty respectively. The second concern is places in certain faculties are prescribed based on gender factor. Faculties that allocate a higher proportion of seats to men are, for example, veterinary science, agricultural economics, cooperative economics, agricultural industry, agricultural business, marine science, forestry and archaeology. This practice reflects stereotyped notion that these disciplines suit men more than women. Only nurse education admits more women. In addition, there are a handful of faculties that set equal quota for both sexes so that the student faculty is balanced.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that educational opportunity for women is enhanced at basic educational level that now includes lower secondary education, an extension from 6 years compulsory education. However, there is a need to evaluate a few more issues listed below.

1. An enrollment ratio of 92% discloses that a number of boys and girls who miss out of the system. And a retention rate of 80% shows that some students pre-maturely drop out of the school system. Unfortunately, the data is not broken down by sex. One wonders boys or girls drop out most. A report on national labor survey (3rd round) in 1991 gives an account on population 13 years and over-- the productive workforce, that female population without any education equal 2.1 million or 5.07% of the labor force outnumbering men which total 900,000 or 2.2%. This shows that women with no education

entering the labor market is in great number. One wonders whether children who miss out or attain only primary education are at risk of being lured into child labor or prostitutes.

2. Connected with the above issue is an urgent need to render educational services to those who miss the opportunity so as to prevent new illiterates happening, and to have the most up-dated number of existing illiterates by sexes in order to provide them with literacy program.

A major factor barring women from entering schooling is poverty. In northeastern Thailand, the lowest per capita region, female attendance rate is lower than that of men's because girls are needed with household chores and farm work. Socio-economic status of the family, i.e., parents' attainment level is also a determining factor in relation to schooling. Research has shown that educated parents tend to support their girls' education.

Another factor is that conventional social attitudes are still embedded in certain groups of people. The notion that girls do not need to study much because they will soon be married and then belong to the groom's family. Then what is the point of investing in the education of girls. It is confirmed in several pieces of research that parents will support only boys' schooling if they have limited resources or financial problems.

For women who pursue further education, the choice of preference, be it vocational-based education or higher education, still mirrors social roles' ascription. The situation is further exacerbated when educational administrators and instructors cling to these beliefs. As a result, quota restricting female

admittance in certain disciplines is imposed. This is an abuse of women's right. It is sex discrimination.

Measures and Actions Taken to Promote Women's Education

The following are examples of actions taken.

1. Pursuant to the policy to upgrade educational attainment of the general public, from 6 to 9 years, aiming to raise the quality of life and to enable them to cope with economic and social changes and challenges, a target is set to promote a higher transition rate from grade 6 to lower secondary education. Implementation in the past 5 years has been quite successful, i.e., sixth graders move onto secondary education at a satisfactory rate.

Measures that contribute to the success include a) the expansion of secondary educational places in primary schools so that students experience no further hardship in terms of geographical access; b) exemption of school fees, free handouts of textbooks and uniforms lower the burden of the family; c) raising parents' awareness of the importance of education by means of direct campaign by teachers and supervisors.

The above measures especially the first one help indeed facilitates girls staying in schools because parents are assured of their children's safety on the road to school.

2. There are also specially designed projects to boost transition to higher levels. Some of them specifically target female sixth graders in a few northern provinces because these girls are prone to seduction into commercial sex trade.

Attempts are made to survey the number of girls in every school, and their background. Then they are enlisted and singled out based on children at risk of being sold or forced to work illegally. Among the risk factors are that they either come from a broken family, experience financial hardship, or have sisters/kins as sex workers. People in charge will bring these children into camps to participate in activities that aim to change their attitudes and values, to raise the awareness of the significance of education, and to orientate them to possible vocations and job opportunities. Most of these children will be enrolled in boarding schools spreading all over the country in order to house them in a new environment. In addition, funding is given to the family on the basis of need in order that they can start up business to replace the opportunity cost incurred from the lost of their children's labor.

Primarily these attempts are ventured by NGOs. But the scope of work is limited. Later on, the government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) has take up on this initiative. The MOE joins hands with NGOs, private enterprises and communities in mobilizing resources because the nature of this project is rather costly. The project is effective to a large extent. It is obvious that girls' participation rate at lower secondary education is heightened. It is expected that in the long run child prostitutes will be eliminated as well as the spread of infectious HIV virus. This will greatly benefit the society. We need to evaluate the effectiveness of the project by investigating further whether these girls drop out pre-maturely or not, whether they are equipped with life skills to service the society and to find gainful employment to support themselves, whether socialization in school can form in children desirable values and attitudes or not.

3. In four southern provinces, where more than 90% of the population are Moslems, promotion rates especially among girls are below the norm. Although there is no specifically designed project to raise girls' promotion rates, special measures are adopted, i.e., teachings are undertaken by female teachers, female students are allowed to wear traditional costumes, to go home for prayer or prayer rooms are provided at school. Moreover, in terms of relevance to local context, Islam religion is offered as part of the curriculum.

Participation in Non-Formal Education

1. Non-formal education programs are provided for both males and females. It includes functional literacy and educational programs leading to certifications equivalent to those in the formal system. These programs are designed for youths and adults who are out of the educational system. Participants can opt for part-time, evening, Saturday and Sunday, and correspondence/distance courses. Evening and weekend classes are more suitable/attuned to women residing in urban areas rather than those in rural areas due to the ease of access. Every year NFE programs register 600,000 participants, 51% of which are women.

2. Short courses are also offered by the MOE and other ministries. The natures and type of courses rendered are along the lines of functions and duties of respective ministries. It should be noted that a large number of women tend to choose home economics and handcrafts.

The National Institute for Skill Development under the Ministry for Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW), which is responsible for job training, runs a

number of courses on pre-job training and skill upgrading for the industrial sector. 85% of the trainees are men.

Further, there is a Division for Women and Child Labor under the MLSW that is in charge of giving knowledge and consultancy services to women and children in the workforce as well as to oversee labor protection and welfare.

There are also private institutions, most of which locate in cities, that conduct courses for the general public. Statistics for 1993 showed that most trainees were women. The courses they took were computer applications, beauty and dress-making, language, hotel and tourism, and typing. The fact that women opt for private institutions may imply that these establishments are of a higher quality, thus graduates are able to find employment. What should be borne in mind is that these women must afford and bear the cost of training that tends to be several times higher than those run by the public sector.

In addition, there are some NGOs that conduct courses targeting women. Courses range from quality of life development, women's rights, laws that women should know, and vocational training. It should be pointed out those business courses for women such as management of small enterprises, are on the rise. But so far technical educational training is still unavailable.

Issues and Recommendations for Actions

1. Objectives of educational development for women are as follows:

1.1 Eradicate women's illiteracy, maintain literacy in women with low education and prevent new illiteracy in women.

1.2 Encourage all young girls to complete at least 9 years of basic education.

1.3 Promote and encourage women who have left the formal system to pursue further education through non-formal and in-formal educational services.

1.4 Change attitudes of and stimulate women to be more interested in the field of science and technology, including those that are usually popular among men in the formal as well as the non-formal and in-formal education systems.

The above objectives should be clearly reiterated in both the National Education Development Plan and the National Social and Economic Development Plan although they are already stated in the National Women Development plan. It may appear awkward but the positive side of it is that the two former plans have to be endorsed by the cabinet. Hence, political commitment is assured.

2. In order to make effective educational development for women, the following measures have to be implemented.

2.1 Develop data collection systems at both the local and national levels so that up-to-date information on enrollment disaggregated by sex at every level be gathered and collated, and institute a systematic monitoring mechanism.

Data collection on basic education should be carried out by schools and communities. The advantage of the community being encouraged to participate in educational management, i.e., to survey and collect data systematically especially those relating to enrollment, dropout, the number of children in distressed, and illiterates are comprehensive micro level data that will be useful in monitoring the provision of education to cover both men and women. Participation by the community will also lower costs that would be incurred if the required data are to be surveyed and collected by external researchers.

2.2 Campaign to raise the awareness of the importance of education for women as well as to eliminate ascriptive choices of preference.

1) The campaign must be undertaken systematically and continuously.

2) At family and community levels, the most cost effective approach is to campaign through community organizations and/or women's organizations at village and district levels.

In Thailand there exist Village/District Women Development Committees, and District Councils that are established legally. But many of these organizations, which are established through bureaucratic channels, do not function properly. Others formed naturally by local leaders to tackle problems and to develop their communities are more effective.

Campaign on women's issues through community organizations should not be imposed by external agencies. It should rather build up on

community learning processes through conversations, discussions and learning from experiences of other successful communities with the help of local wisdom, or external agents as facilitators or supervisors. These are models implemented successfully by NGOs.

3) At societal level, campaign can be conducted by means of disseminating news, other information and simplified research findings through all the media as core instruments. Anyway whether on purpose or not, the development of women's quality of life and image should in no circumstances degrade the status of women.

4) Develop understanding among educational managers at all levels, as well as planners and administrators of policies, targets, and guidelines of educational development.

5) At educational institution levels

- Secondary Schools. Provide guidance and counselling services on further education and diversified career opportunities. Scholars or agencies/organizations responsible for women's development should give assistance or provide materials to schools. Teachers can play vital and instrumental roles during teaching/learning processes by encouraging female students to take up more on mathematics and science related fields.

- Vocational and Technical Colleges. Administrators and planners should design measures to encourage more women to choose industrial and agricultural streams. Concerted efforts among schools and colleges, and also from women's development organizations in screening students for scholarships

and guidance can help increase the number of female students taking up more of the male dominant disciplines with prior consent from heads of the institutions.

- University Education. Quota restricting women's admission in certain disciplines and others that are not disclosed to the public should be repealed.

- Promote women's studies and integrate women's issues in teaching/learning processes at university and teacher training college levels. The integration of women's issues in basic subjects to be taken by every student, who will be key human resources of the nation, will hopefully form right concepts of men's and women's positive and contributing roles, and recognize that women's development is parallel to that of men.

2.3 Promote study/research about women, for example;

1) The study on content analysis of textbooks as well as supplementary readings at primary and secondary levels to explore whether, intentionally or unintentionally, conventional roles ascribed to men and women are reinforced, whether divisive roles are instituted so as to suggest modifications in concrete terms.

2) To research roles of socialization in transmitting and reproducing values and attitudes about women, roles of men and women as well as their relationships in social activities so that recommendations are identified, refinement of teaching/learning processes is undertaken, and teacher training be adapted accordingly.

3) To encourage the development of textbooks and manuals which can serve as inputs in the teaching of women's studies or in the integration of women's issues in basic subjects offered by universities and teacher training colleges mentioned above.

2.4 For women education development to be effective

1) Policies and targets are to be translated into plan of actions. Implementing agencies are to devise and include in their corporate plans programs/projects incorporating costs and activities.

Programs/projects relating to women's education should bear two characteristics, i.e.,

a) They incorporate all programs/projects on women's education. It must also be ensured that women and men will equally benefit from these programs/projects. Measures and methodologies adopted should not be discriminating. However, to prevent gaps of disparities widening specifically designed operations in favor of women may be necessary. For instance, the success of the campaign to eradicate illiteracy, which fell from 18% in 1970 to 9% in 1985, without due consideration to appropriate techniques to target women, was marred by the fact that female illiterates remained twice as much as males'.

General and specifically designed measures for women do not necessarily incur a higher cost, but they instead bring out concerted efforts for both men and women.

b) Programs and projects initiated should have a special reference to women, i.e., targeting women. It is necessary to devise positive discriminating programs/projects so those particular groups of women are reached, for example, women in especially disadvantaged situations or those identified as vulnerable.

2) Participation in planning and decision-making processes by the community is to be encouraged. For this to materialize, centralized educational administration must be reformed. The following are proposed people's participation by territorial levels.

a) Community organizations and Women Development Committees jointly identify the scope of work at community level and delineate responsibility among involving agencies.

b) At institutional level, parents and the community must be represented in the School Administration Committee. They would not only help plan the development of educational establishments, but also assist in refining curriculum along the lines of local ways of living and mobilizing local resources for education.

c) At provincial level, members of the Provincial Education Development Committee should represent the public, parents and scholars, if possible. But if it is not, then campaigns should be made to enrich the members with knowledge and issues about women.

d) The developments of policies, targets and measures as well as recommendations on budget allocation are usually deliberated at national level

committees. Therefore, it is crucial that leading women, who are knowledgeable in education and women's issues, are represented in national committees.

The above forms of participation are viewed from planning perspectives. However, in Thailand there is a central organization that is charged with every aspect of women's development and has links with private sectors and other women's organizations at all levels. The apex of that organization is the Central Coordinating and Administrative Committee. Besides, there are specialist committees on education, vocation and culture, for instance. The Education Development Committee 's duties cover campaign, study, research and recommendation on educational development for women in general as well as on issues that need redressing. Some members of this committee are practionaers and policy makers involved in education at macro level. Some others are university lecturers, and leading women in the fields of education and politics.

3) Planners and administrators must be knowledgeable not only in educational planning techniques and approaches, and in project identification and initiation, they must also clearly understand women issues, complimentary roles of men and women in this changing society. The training project, Gender-base Analysis, offered to educational planners and administrators has helped those, who are involved in project initiation, to visualize possible benefits to be accrued to women. Unfortunately, training projects of this sort is but a few. However, among the few undertaken, the one offered to key personnel in the Ministry of Agricultural and Cooperatives is worth a commendation because it goes to scale.

4) Support from politicians is highly vital in terms of budget appropriation. Therefore, it is necessary to equip politicians with knowledge on women's issues. The presence of increased female politicians will help represent involved agencies in negotiating for women educational budget. For women's issues to have sustained political commitment, it is crucial that these issues are approved and endorsed by the cabinet so that resources allocation is assured. Further, the submission of concrete plans/projects with estimated cost outlay will provide decision makers the necessary information on which decisions can be based. The supply of necessary information and frequent dialogue with budget personnel, whose duties are to present suggestions and recommendations to decision makers, are also vital to plans/programs/projects receiving financial assistance.

5) Women's groups in various fields, private organizations for women's development and agencies directly deal with women and development should join force in monitoring political promises to redress discrimination against women as well as in giving recommendations and guidelines to further develop women education.

3. Recommendations in relation to the education of women aged 12-25, especially those who left the formal educational system, are as follows:

3.1 First and foremost is to acquire information identifying their educational attainment level and economic productivity status, i.e., employed or unemployed; their places of work, i.e., in agricultural, industrial or informal sector.

3.2 Provide education and training services in accordance with their educational, socio-economic background, and their needs.

a) Basic literacy programs should be provided to this age-group who have low education so that they are able to seek gainful employment and hence be economically independent.

b) For those already in the workforce who have attained primary education:

- Provide this target group with appropriate support services, for example, through non-formal channels so that they attain secondary education. There are several on-going projects in which employees can attend part-time, evening or weekend courses, and sit for examination for qualifications. This can come about as a result of partnership between non-formal agencies and private enterprises.

The extension of basic education to all female employees is instrumental to overall national productivity since Thailand is undergoing an economic structural change from labor-intensive to technological-based industry. It is expected that secondary school graduates' potential will heighten. Hence they will be able to manage better new technology. In case they fail to cope with changing circumstances, there is a high chance of them being laid off which was the case of a textile company that made their employees redundant after the introduction of new production technologies.

- Promote upgrade skill training for female employees as well expose them to new technology. This can be organized on a continuing basis by, and in the firms, and by other involved agencies such as the National Institute for Skill Development, which presently only admit male employees.

- Women in agriculture should also have the opportunity to benefit from the existing non-formal educational services in order to upgrade their educational attainment level and their quality of life. Further, they should have access to vocational and technical training.

- Training on management, business and marketing should also be delivered to women who are in the informal sector.

- Women in distress or those who are prone to take up unbecoming vocations need to be taken care of without delay. These women should be taken out of dangerous situations or work sites. Among the primary measures to be carried out are, for example, clearing them from forced or bonded labor, and providing them with shelter for immediate care. Later on, they should be provided with vocational training with which they can employ to generate decent income.

3.3 Raise the public's awareness, especially employers' of the necessity to provide education and training for the 12-25 -- year age-group. Employers should be encouraged to provide opportunity in education and training especially for female labor. Campaigns should be launched to change discriminating attitudes towards women that often result in women gaining

lower wages compared to men for the same type of jobs. Further, career prospects should not be biased against women.

3.4 Formulate concrete policy to support women's education.

a) Allocate funding to programs/projects directing at women's education and training.

b) facilitate their learning by allowing access to public establishments and materials, and providing resource persons, instructors as requested.

c) Allow tax reduction for enterprises that have concrete plans/programs of education and training for this target group.

d) Promote cooperative approach in education and training, for this particular group among public and private enterprises.

3.5 Develop plans/programs for this age-group especially those already in the workforce, because they have to adapt to the country's transitional economy. It is very crucial for both enterprises and employees to reorientate themselves otherwise they will not be able to compete and survive in this fast changing world. One of the major concerns here is that female employees are likely to be victims and made redundant in times of recession and hardship. If they are not retrained to cope with changes and new technology, they will probably be laid off first, or paid unfairly. Incapability on the part of employees to adapt to changes and challenges will drastically affect the overall economy.

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GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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I. BACKGROUND

1.   In the last thirty years, education policies in developing countries aimed at raising skill levels and making education available to expanded population strata, have been focussing mainly on expanding educational facilities and infrastructure and increasing budgetary allocation for education. In the period 1975-1985, Government expenditures for education increased remarkably in South Asia (from 2.0 to 3.1 percent of GDP) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (from 4.2 to 5.0 percent), and somehow at a slower pace in Latin America (from 4.2 to 4.4 percent), Central and West Asia (from 3.9 to 4.4 percent), East Asia (from 2.8 to 3.1 percent) and North Africa (from 6.0 to 6.9 percent).

2.   In general, achievements have been remarkable. In particular, primary school enrollment rates increased significantly. This improvement, however, was uneven between male and female enrollment, as shown in the following Table 1.

Table 1. Enrollment Rates in Selected World Regions

Percentage of Age Group Enrolled

	Male			Female		
	1965	1987	%incr.	1965	1987	%incr.
Sub-Saharan Africa	57.8	76.4	+32%	37.0	61.1	+65%
Asia	74.8	96.8	+29%	59.7	84.0	+41%
N.Afr./Middle East	85.9	101.1	+17%	52.0	80.8	+55%

Source: Unesco data

3.   In the last thirty years, female enrollment in primary schools has significantly improved, and has shown growth rates significantly higher than male enrollment. Increases in female enrollment have been particularly significant in Sub-Saharan Africa, in North Africa and in Middle East. However, female enrollment levels are still substantially lower than those for male enrollment, ranging from 80 percent to 87 percent of current male enrollment rates in the above world regions.

4.   This situation is further aggravated by a higher rate of dropout for female than for male students. This is particularly noticeable in low-income countries, and, among world regions, in Sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa & Middle East, as shown in the following Table.

Table 2. Primary School Dropout Rates, 1988

	Girls	Boys
Low-income countries	9.6	8.2
Lower middle-income countries	6.1	5.9
Upper middle-income countries	6.2	6.3
Sub-Saharan Africa	8.6	7.3
North Africa & Middle East	6.0	4.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	7.8	8.8

Source: Unesco Database

5.   Although dropout rates vary considerably from country to country, on average girls' dropout in low-income countries amounts to 9.6 percent compared to 8.2 percent for boys. Among low-income countries, female dropout rates are particularly significant in Guinea-Bissau (23.3 percent), Mozambique (22.0 percent), Haiti (15.2 percent), Malawi (14.9 percent), Madagascar (14.9 percent), Guinea (13.5 percent), Benin (13.3 percent), and Ethiopia (13.2 percent).

6.   In Sub-Saharan Africa, primary school dropout rates for girls average 8.6 percent compared to 7.3 percent for boys. In North Africa & the Middle East, 6.0 percent of girls dropout compared to 4.3 percent of boys. In contrast, in Latin American and Caribbean countries primary school girls are less likely to dropout of school than are boys.

7.   Available country data clearly indicate the severity of the female dropout problem. Only 26.9 percent of girls in Malawi who enter first grade complete primary school; the corresponding percentage for boys is 45.9 percent. In Kenya, of those pupils who begin grade 1, fewer than half complete primary school, and the average is lower for girls (34 percent) than for boys (41 percent). In Bangladesh, only 5 percent entering grade 1 complete grade 12; the dropout rate for girls is higher for girls at all levels.

8.   The dropout problem for girls appears to be age-specific; in primary schools dropout rates are highest in the later years and dropout rates in secondary school are particulary heavy. In Sub-Sahara Africa (paticulary French speaking countries), for instance, recent data on primary dropouts by class and by gender reveal that dropout rates for girls sharply increase in the later primary grades and are much higher than the dropout rates for boys. Most females dropout in grade 5, three-quarters of them because of marriage and pregnancy.

9.   In most developing countries, there is indeed evidence of an important difference between boys and girls in terms of enrollment, droupout, and achievement rates, beginning at primary level and moving up through the education system. In fact, girls and women education is influenced by a more complex set of demographic, sociological, cultural, political and economic factors, than for male education. These barriers must be understood in order to formulate effective policies and programs to raise female education levels.

        Some French speaking countries in Africa have taken measures to motivate female attendance. The most popular approaches are discussed in the following:

II. REVIEW OF MEASURES TO STIMULATE FEMALE
ACCESS TO PRIMARY SCHOOL

1. Promoting Awareness

10.   Awareness campaigns aimed at parents and the community to raise female enrollment have been launched in several countries. For instance, Sahelien countries recently conducted informational campaigns and distributed publicity materials encouraging parents to enroll their children in school. A special effort to raise female enrollment was made with assistance of local leaders in minority areas and campaigns through the Women's Federation.

11.   In Morocco, as a component of the ongoing World Bank-assisted Rural Primary Education project, promotional campaigns stressing the benefits of female education to families and communities are held in villages where new schools are established. Preliminary data suggest an increase of 5 percent in girls' grade 1 enrollments since the campaigns started in 1989 which may be due partly to the campaigns' success, in addition to other important factors such as the provision of additional primary school facilities, discounted textbooks, school canteens, etc.

12.   Awareness campaigns advertising the benefits of educating girls are also included in the World Bank-financed Second Human Resources Development Project in Senegal.

13.   In general, awareness campaigns are a useful tool to sensitize parents and create an environment conducive to improving female enrollment, particularly when they are timely accompanied by other measures, directed in particular to lower the cost to parents of educating girls.

2. Lowering the Cost to Parents

14.   The opportunity cost of education to the low-income family is a major factor contributing to non enrollment. Even when the government pays for much of it, parents are expected to pay direct costs of schooling fees, uniforms, textbooks, notebooks, pencils, etc.

15.   The lower the family's income, the more difficult it is to cover these costs. It is estimated that actual expenditures on schooling amount to about 4 percent of household consumption in low-income countries, 6 percent in middle-income countries, and 8 percent in industrial countries.[1]

16.   Cost of schooling as percentage of household income is a very important factor, but not the only factor affecting female enrollment. It is interesting to note that about the same levels of female enrollment may be reached in countries within the same GNP range and with similar socio-cultural environment, but with very different ed.cost/family income ratios. For instance, among countries in this category are Tunisia and Turkey, with a ed.cost/family income ratio of 9 percent for Tunisia vs. 1 percent for Turkey. On the other side, countries within the same GNP range and approximately the same ed.costs/family income ratio, but having different socio-cultural environments, may show extremely different female enrollment rates. A typical

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[1]   Floro, M. and Wolf, J. "The Economics and Social Impacts of Girls Education in Developing Countries"

example is the comparison between India (female enrollment ratio 82 percent) versus Pakistan (27 percent only).

17.   While the direct costs of schooling are generally similar for boys and girls, there is large evidence that for low-income families, the choice of whom to enroll in school is often made against girls and in favor of boys. Participation of school-aged girls is likely to improve if school-related expenses borne by the family decrease.

18.   Policies to lower costs to parents for sending girls to school have been initiated in a number of countries. The most popular initiatives are reviewed in the following.

19.   **Feeding programs/canteen.** A specific way to reduce cost to parents is providing **school feeding programs.** Food for school can be directly supported by the Government or provided by Donors, international organizations such as the World Food Program, and NGOs. School feeding programs permit not only to encourage attendance, but at the same time to address nutritional deficiencies, which in some countries tend to be more pronounced for girls.

20.   **Teaching materials.** Another measure frequently adopted to reduce cost to parents is providing learning material, particularly textbooks, at reduced price or free.

21.   Other initiatives include the waiving of tuition and other school fees, the abolition or free provision of uniforms, etc. The above initiatives are frequently grouped in "packages" of incentives, rather than being developed separately. Therefore projects typically include a number of measures to reduce costs to parents.

22.   In Morocco measures to reduce school cost to parents have been increasingly included in MOE-supported Programs. The Rural Primary Education Project , envisaged the **acquisition of textbooks** to be distributed to school cooperatives who would recover their actual costs through a user fee equal to about one-third of this cost (on the basis of average life of textbooks estimated at three years). Students would be issued textbooks for the duration of the academic year and return them at the end of the school year. Collection of user fees would coincide with the time when cash is generally available in the community (e.g. after harvest). Non-reusable school materials (pencils,notebooks,etc.) would be sold to students at cost. Net savings for families were estimated at about half the annual average cost of textbooks and material per child, equal to more than 5 percent of the disposable income of most rural families with 3 children in primary school. Other forms of incentives under the same project included the promotion of school health services, through education, provision of basic technical equipment (scales, eye charts, stethoscopes and motorcycles to be utilized by nursing staff). A Study was also included to assess the feasibility of eyeglasses prescription and distribution at affordable prices.

3. Providing Scholarships

23.   Reduced school costs to parents have expanded girls access to education, however often hidden direct and opportunity costs still prevent girls from participating. In those cases, providing direct incentives such as scholarships, has often proven effective in improving girls' education. Experiences of providing scholarships to girls in primary schools are however relatively rare.

24.   The scholarship approach has been particularly followed to stimulate girls enrollment to middle and secondary schools. A brief review of these experiences, although not strictly related to the scope of this Paper, may however be useful.

25.   One of the early examples of girl scholarship schemes started in Bangladesh under the Secondary Education Scholarship Program financed by USAID and managed by the Asia Foundation. The Program gave over 18,000 girls in grades 6-10 scholarships to cover secondary school tuition. Initiated in 1977, the project succeeded in almost doubling female secondary school enrollments from 27.3 percent of eligible girls before the project, to 43.5 percent after project intervention. The number of female dropouts over the same period also decreased substantially in the project area, from 14.7 percent to 3.5 percent. In addition, the possibility of receiving scholarship in grade 6 has led to increase female attendance in the lower primary school grades in program areas.

26.   The justification for, and appropriateness of scholarship particularly at the primary school cannot be treated in isolation from the sectoral budgetary situation and from macro-economic considerations. In many situations, to extend scholarships to primary school female students may simply be not feasible. However, there may be justification to target a specific population of female children. Criteria may include the family income level, the population of an economically depressed geographic area, etc.

27.   In particular cases, it would be useful to examine the appropriateness of extending scholarships at the grade 5 of primary school, which is typically critical in terms of girl dropout rates. This might act as an incentive and influence family's decision to enroll girls to upper grades.

4. Recruiting More Female Teachers

28.   There is a broad consensus that provision of female teachers is a major contributor to girls' enrollement. Evidence suggest that the presence of female teachers can draw more girls into the schools. In Kerala, for example, which has the highest female literacy (66 percent) and enrollment rates of all states in India, over 60 percent of the teachers are women, compared with fewer than 20 percent in the states of Bihard and Uttar Pradesh, which have the lowest female enrollment rate. It is worthwhile to note that the fecondity ratio in Kerala has been reduced to the extremely low level of 2.3 children/woman, lower than in Thailand, China or Ireland. The rate of contraceptive use is three times the national ratio.

29.   In general the percentage of female teachers versus total teaching staff is still low in developing countries, as shown in the Table 3 below:

Table 3 . Female Teaching Staff in Primary and Secondary Levels, by Region, 1990

Females as Percentage of Total Teaching Staff

	Primary level	Secondary level
Africa	39	33
Africa exluding Arab states*	36	29
Latin America & Caribbeans	79	49
Asia	44	35
Oceania	66	48
All Developing Countries	49	37
World	55	43

Source : UNESCO Statistical Yearbook , 1991
*All of Sub-Saharan Africa except Sudan, Somalia, and Djibouti

30.   Particularly where male-female contact is prescribed, as in much of South Asia or the Middle East, parents object that girls be taught by men, and strongly prefer female teachers. In Yemen, for instance, cultural requirements strongly favor female teachers for girls, concerns are not limited only to matters of moral appropriateness, but reflect also physical security considerations. In Togo, for instance, many parents fear that the risk of pregnancies may increase where girls are taught by men.

31.   In Yemen, the recently started Basic Education Project has one of its major goals the enhancement of girls' education in rural areas where female participation in schooling is very low. The number of female teacher trainees is very low, relative to males, particularly for those who intend to teach in under-served rural areas. During 1990-1991, enrollment of females in primary TTIs of 3, 4 and 5 years duration was only 11.4 percent of a total of 22,689. Such a low proportion of female enrollements in the TTIs exacerbates the problem of the low proportion of current female teachers .

5. Putting Schools within Reach

32.   The closer the school is to home, the less parents tend to worry about girls' safety and reputation, because girls can be kept under closer watch. Putting schools within reach of children and locating schools closer to children's homes is an effective approach to expand girls access to education.

33.   It is also necessary to point out that the availability of primary schools has to be reasonably correlated with the availability of middle/secondary school facilities. Particularly in rural areas there is a definite link between enrollment rate in primary schools and availability of post-primary schools. The absence of post-primary schools in rural areas is probably a strong factor contributing to low demand for primary education, in the sense that it promotes self-selection by families, only aware of the labor market opportunities linked to post-primary education.

34.   The Rural Primary Education Project in Morocco, launched in 1989, included a range of initiatives to increase access and improved facilities to students in rural areas through the provision of about 11,600 new classrooms and about 1,400 canteens, 2,900 staff houses, 1,500 headmasters offices,and sanitary facilities and water wells. Rural communities were encouraged to participate in the construction and maintenance of primary facilities. Under the Rural Basic Education Development Project launched in 1991, a research study is being executed to evaluate the impact of the project measures on the school access and participation in rural areas, particularly of girls.

35.   The Republic of Yemen is implementing the construction of classrooms for girls in rural areas (at a cost of US$13.2 million). The project would construct about 600 new classrooms in rural communities of 1,000-2,500 inhabitants, where female enrollments are less than 20 percent. It is expected that, at the rate of three classrooms per rural school, the 600 project classrooms would be located in about 200 rural communities spread out over 6-8 governorates.

6. Offering Flexible School Time

36.   To understand how parents choose their daughters' schools, it is important to consider what these girls do in addition to, or in place of, going to school. The amount of time girls spend working in or out of the household indicates that the opportunity cost of their time in school may be quite high and thus may explain why fewer girls attend schools.

7. Allowing Enrollment of Girls at an Earlier Age

37.   This approach has been tried in Morocco allowing enrollment to primary schools of girls less than 7 years old (5 or 6 years old, especially those who attended the Quranic schools).

38.   It has been tried also in Gambia, where the school entry age was lowered from 8 to 6 years, and modified criteria for teacher training introduced to help recruit more female teachers. In-service teacher training programs, adoption of positive female role models and elements of family life education into the curriculum were also tried to raise girls' enrollment.

III. RATIONALE FOR EXPANDING FEMALE EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Inter-Generational Distribution

39.   Girls'education has been associated with increased desires to educate their children, and correlated with increased participation in education by their children. The daughters of better educated mothers are likely to have healthier and better educated children. When considering that an average african woman has about 40 grandchildren, the impact is certainly striking. Evidence of how that relationship is established has been provided by a number of qualitative studies, and supported by experiences world-wide.

40.   The above benefits are visible and well documented. However, attempts to quantify their socio-economic impact are complex. Approaches have been formulated both to support specific case studies, and at a general level through the conceptualization of methods to quantify the profitability of investment in education.

41.   For example, Lawrence H. Summers[2] estimated the cost and benefits of educating 1000 girls for one additional year. He estimated how much it would cost to produce similar health and fertility benefits using standard medical and family planning interventions. He concluded that in Pakistan, for instance, by providing in 1990 1000 girls with an extra year of primary schooling it would cost $30,000. This would avert 60 infant deaths, as well as 500 births. It would cost approximately US$81,000 to achieve the same results through conventional medical and family planning interventions.

42.   Even after taking account of the time lag between when girls are educated and when they grow up and have children, the social benefits of educating girls are enough to cover the costs (and without taking any account of the market return or the benefits for environmental protection, AIDS control and other benefits of reduced child morbidity).

43.   Economic models have been developed to capture and quantify , on a broad scale, the profitability of investing in education. A vaste literature is available on this subject. An extensive work in this area has been conducted in the last twenty years by George Psacharopoulos, who, in a recent update[3], concluded that, among the three main levels of education, primary education

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2/   Summers, L. "Investing in All the People."

3/   Psacharopoulous, G. "Returns to Investment in Education."

continues to exhibit the highest social profitability in all world regions, and also indicated that social and private returns decline by the level of the country's per capita income, as shown in the following Table 5.

Table 5. Returns to Investment in Education by Level (percent)
Full Method, Latest year, Regional Average

Region	Social			Private		
	Prim.	Sec.	Higher	Prim.	Sec.	Higher
SSA	24.3	18.2	11.2	41.3	26.6	27.8
Asia *	19.9	13.3	11.7	39.0	18.9	19.9
Eur/Middle East/ North Africa *	15.5	11.2	10.6	17.4	15.9	21.7
Lat.Amer/Caribb.	17.9	12.8	12.3	26.2	16.8	19.7
OECD	14.4	10.2	8.7	21.7	12.4	12.3
World	18.4	13.1	10.9	29.1	18.1	20.3

*Non-OECD

Source: G. Psacharopoulos

44.		The lowest social rate of return average refers to higher education in OECD countries and is close to the (long term) opportunity cost of capital. This implies that the profitability of human and physical capital, at the margin, has reached virtual equilibrium.

45.		The author also concluded that returns to education calculated by gender show in selected developing countries a higher return for female versus male education, as shown in the following Table (Table 6):

Table 6. Returns to Education by Gender

Country	Year	Level	Men	Women	
Bolivia		1989	Overall	7.3	7.7
Botswana	1975	Overall	16.4	18.2	
Guatemala	1989	Overall	14.2	16.3	
Honduras	1989	Overall	17.2	19.8	
Ivory Coast	1984	Overall	11.1	22.6	
Jamaica	1989	Overall	28.0	31.7	
Malaysia	1979	Overall	5.3	8.2	
Mexico	1984	Overall	14.1	15.0	
Panama	1989	Overall	12.6	17.1	
Paraguay	1990	Overall	10.3	12.1	
Philippines	1988	Overall	12.4	12.4	
Sri Lanka	1981	Overall	6.9	7.9	
Thailand	1972	Overall	9.1	13.0	
Uruguay	1989	Overall	9.0	10.6	

Source: G. Psacharopoulos

46.   On a world scale, the above country-specific indications are confirmed, although at a smaller extent, as difference in returns between male and female education is generally negligeable in developed countries.

47.   It is not within the scope of this Paper to discuss the adequacy of current approaches to measure the returns of children, and in particular girls, education. Quantification methods may still not be adequately comprehensive, and controversies and critiques abund on specific criteria and assumptions used in these exercises. Nevertheless there is general consensus that the return to investment in girls education in most developing countries is at least as satisfactory as that for boys education, particularly for primary school. The impact of education on women is tangible. There is firm evidence that educated women produce healthier families and stronger societies. This supports the growing belief that investing in educational opportunities for girls is perhaps the best yelding return of all investments in developing countries.

48.   If there is such evidence, why then the gap in female education relative to male education, although diminishing, is still substantial in some world regions, particularly South and West Asia and in North and Sub-Saharan Africa?

49.   The answer is mainly in the criteria and perceptions intervening in the family's decision on whether to send or not girls to school. Such decision is both conditioned by economic factors (the lower the family income, the shorter the time span within which tangible benefits from education are expected) and cultural/religious /social factors. Among the various models developed to explain family behaviour, the closest to reality is probably the "unified family" approach, by which the family is considered as a "production center" where resources are pooled together and assignments are distributed in function of the comparative advantage and opportunity cost of each family member in expleting a given function.

50.   In many societies, girls'schooling has, within the family, a higher opportunity costs than boys', and this explains in large part the generally lower enrollment rates for girls. Particularly in Asia and Africa, girls' household activities seem to have more impact than boys' activities on parents' own earnings. Parents rely on their daughters to do chores, so that they can work. In sending girls to schools, the family loses the income that the mother might have earned because the daughter subtituted for the mother in home chores, of which the care of young siblings is particularly important.

51.   Social, cultural and religious behaviours also strongly condition the decision-making process. In some societies, a conservative socio-cultural environment still represents a key factor discouraging female education. Deeply-rooted beliefs ("educated women make bad housewives", "educated women are more difficult to keep under control", "husbands feel intimidated by educated wives...therefore an educated woman has greater difficulty in finding husband", "to send out a girl for education is bad for her reputation", etc.) and anxieties about the physical security of girls away from home, greatly influence the decision of enrolling girls to school. It is not coincidental that some of the countries with the lowest female enrollment are also those where the most conservative attitudes exist in respect to women role and behaviour in society.

52.   Therefore the key issue to be solved is how the family's decision-making process can be influenced to favor a positive attitude towards expanded female education. As decisions related to economic considerations and constraints are typically very rational, it could be argued that general economic growth would eventually favor female access to schooling and that specific policies are therefore not required. Previous studies have indicated that, as per capita GNP increases, female enrollment rates eventually rise, and women generally move toward parity with men.

53.   However, it also appears that expanded female enrollment and gender parity do not occur automatically as economic development proceeds. Countries with relatively high per capita GNP (such as ,for instance, Morocco and Jordan) have shown disappointing achievements in terms of progress in female enrollment. On the other side, countries with low per capita GNP (such as, for instance, India, Sri Lanka and Lesotho) have shown remarkable success in female enrollments with gender parity.

54.   In those countries where successful female access to schooling has been achieved, deliberate educational policies were established to promote female education. This suggests that female education has the best chances to progress when macro-economic policies to promote general social and economic growth are accompanied by specific educational policies tailored to the particular typology and requirements of the female population.

55.   According to the above indicated accepted methodologies, the return to primary education appears to be the highest,among world regions, in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also, returns to education by gender indicate a generally higher return for female versus male education in most SSA countries. However, the general progress of primary education in the SSA region is still unsatisfactory compared to other world regions, as shown in the following Table:

Table 7. Gross Primary Enrollment Ratio, by Gender and Region, 1986

Region	Male	Female	Gender Ratio
Sub-Saharan Africa	73	58	0.79
East Asia & Pacific	131	117	0.89
South Asia	98	69	0.70
Middle East & North Africa	104	91	0.88
Latin America & Caribbean	110	108	0.98

Source: World Development Report 1989

56.   Also, the completion rate of female students at primary level is particularly low in SSA countries: 36.4 percent only. The ratio of female teachers, as percentage of total teaching staff is also the world's lowest: about 36 percent (see Table 3). In general, the situation reflects the current conditions of economic stagnation and the particularly complex array of diverse socio-cultural environments typical of the SSA region. It also indicates the risk of a widening gap between female access to primary education in most SSA countries compared to other developing countries. Such situation requires concrete and specific

corrective interventions by SSA governments, and an increased focus by Donors assistance programs.

CONCLUSIONS

57.   In recognition of the social and economic importance of educating women, the Nort and Sub-Sahara Africa countries' efforts to address female education are expanding. Studies have multiplied. More projects in recent years have begun to address several constraints at once. It is also encouraging to see that more and more primary education projects in SSA are including female education components. In addition to projects recently launched and underway, a substantial number of operations is under preparation which includes the gender dimension, in Benin, Guinea, Togo, Morocco,(Rwanda), Senegal, Zambia, etc. At this stage, as most ongoing projects are still at early stage of implementation, experience is still limited.

58.   To conclude, the problems of allowing girls an equitable access to education should not be valued in abstraction from a frequently complex socio-economic context where so many different priorities painfully compete. There is however substantial evidence that educated women can play a more fruitful economic and social role in their societies, and that investment in girls education provides durable results. It also appears that a special attention to girls access to primary education is well deserved in Africa countries, in view of existing conditions (in term of enrollment, dropout, repetition and female teaching presence) which are below the (non encouraging) average for Developing countries .

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THE CASE OF PROGRAM PROMESA

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Relevant and culturally appropriate education, is perhaps the most important tool for decreasing the discrimation against women, and for guaranteeing that we become equal partners with men in society.   More and more it is becoming evident that while the extremist views of the suffragettes were essential at the beginning of the century, now a less radical view of women's programs has emerged. Today most programs talk of "empowering women so that they can make decisions affecting their lives". The two opposing arguments as to how to achieve this, being one, that better education and more access to birth control will reduce the population crisis and relieve women of their domestic burdens; and two, that better education and vocational training, improved living conditions, and more women in the labour force will inherently lead to a lower desire by women to have large families

Nevertheless, despite the enormous investments made in both these approaches, the results have been disappointing   Perhaps the main reasons for this are:

1.   **The fragmented nature of many of the programs.** Many of the programs focus on only one or two aspects of women's needs and problems, such as, providing vocational training, sex education, health training, etc. Few have put these needs into an integrated strategy that sees the situation of many women as part of a much broader social and problem.

2.   **The failure to comprehend the importance of a total education.** Education can not just include the teaching of skills; in addition to knowing "what" to do and "how" to do it, a women needs to "have the interest, will and self-confidence" to do it. Too often educational programs for women have stressed the training of skills, with little emphasis being placed on improving their abilities to help themselves, to feel in control, and to influence others.

3.   **Lack of clarity on the importance of working with men as well as women**   Often the women are aware of their needs, but what is required is to create a greater awareness among men of the positive role women could play in society. As such programs should be directed equally at men and women.

4.   **The failure to recognise the importance of changing attitudes about gender from an early age through the creation of healthy educational environments for young children**   It is very often difficult to change the biases and prejudicies of adults with regards to gender equality, so perhaps a more productive approach would be to begin with young children, encouraging them to analyze and discuss from an early age the importance of female participation.

5.   **The lack of efforts to overcome the negative learning environment in which women and children develop.** One concept which is seldom discussed, is the importance of changing the negative environment in which children and women live There needs to be a critical number of educational actions addressed at a large enough group of people to have a

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cumulative effect on the environment. Without this it is difficult to achieve real change, rather what occurs are frustrated efforts.

This paper, therefore looks at the problems of girls and women in the Latin American context, particularly in Colombia, and argues that the best way to achieve a lasting impact is through programs for the creation of a healthy educational environment for women and children. We will use PROMESA (Program for the Improvement of Education, Health and the Environment), a project being implemented in the Pacific Coast of Colombia, as an example of how the "Guidelines of the Conference on Basic Education for All" are being used to strengthen the position of women in society, by creating environments where the educational, social and economic needs of women are met through the process of creating a healthy environment for the development of young children and through the strengthening of the families' and communities' abilities to attend to their needs.

TOWARDS A RENEWED CONCEPT OF WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Education has been seen in the past as the key influence for success in adult life and it continues to be considered as one of the main methods for narrowing the gap between at-risk populations and the rest of society. Great emphasis has been placed on strategies and interventions to avoid school failure, to maximize learning and achievement, to reduce adult illiteracy and to improve their productivity and participation in society. Nevertheless, by focusing objectives mainly on the "intellectual development" of children and adults through institutionalized curriculum processes and by creating artificial learning environments, isolated from their socio-cultural context, and distant from the real needs of adults, children and youth, the prevailing concept of basic education has provided only partial solutions, and has distorted, ignored or under-estimated the natural learning processes through which people grow and develop within their family and community. Besides, this view has generated an educational model that has responded mainly to the dominant groups in society and has left behind or ignored in its policies and programs the groups with special social, cultural, economic, linguistic, psychological needs and characteristics, that in many of our countries is the majority of the population. The most neglected groups being women and girls, specially in the rural areas.

What is needed is a view of education as a flexible, integrated human and social development process, aimed at creating healthy physical and psychological environments for people of all ages to grow and develop, making maximum use of their natural contexts and existing resources. In other words, what is needed is an education based in self-reliant ad integrated community education processes and approaches.

The Declaration of the World Conference on Basic Education for All, that took place in Thailand in March of 1990, serves as a frame of reference for a renewed concept of basic education, as an integral and integrated process. This "new" concept highlights the power of the community, focusing on education as a process of meeting the basic learning needs of all, including the need to live in a more just and humane society. It states that:

o   Satisfying basic learning needs requires an 'expanded vision' of education which encompasses universalizing access and promoting equity, focusing on learning, broadening the means and scope of basic education, enhancing the environment for learning, and strengthening partnerships.

o   The most urgent priority is to ensure access to and improve the quality of education for girls and women, and to remove every obstacle that hampers their active participation. Attention should be focused on underserved groups such as the rural and remote populations, ethnic and linguistic minorities, refugees, etc. to ensure that they do not suffer any discrimination in access to learning opportunities.

o   The focus of basic learning must be on what people actually learn. Active and participatory approaches are particularly valuable in ensuring that learners achieve their fullest potential. While teachers and others education workers have an important role to play, so too do communities and families, given that learning begins at birth.

o   Meeting basic learning needs implies the active involvement of a wide range of partners: families, teachers, communities, private enterprises, government and non-governmental organizations. In particular great potential lies in possible joint actions with NGO's at all levels.

A careful analysis of the "Declaration of the World Conference on Education for All" reveals a broad social and pedagogical view of education. In particular it stresses the legitimization of integral early childhood care and education from the moment children are born, as the base of all education; the concept of integrality of the processes at all levels in the system; the centering of the educational process on the persons, their context and needs, not on the institutions and the curriculum; the need for inter-institutional cooperation and complementarity; and the importance of mobilizing the whole society in the educational process, are some aspects of the Declaration that have the potential to improve qualitatively the standard of living and general situation of women and girls within our society.

From this perspective, education is conceived as a process of human development and social transformation, that transcends the concept of education as accumulation of knowledge and cultural transmission. This view opens the possibilities for each person regardless of sex, age, or socio-cultural conditions, to satisfy his basic learning needs and develop his potential to respond in a more creative and critical way to the development of more just and humane society. Implicit in this, is a concept of an "open educational process" that fosters the transformation of local, regional and national contexts, as it transforms the individuals, groups and communities, without imposing cultural, social, intellectual, or age limits. Moreover, it legitimizes the process of education for all as a permanent learning and development process from the moment the child is conceived.

This concept of education implies profound transformations in the objectives, principles, processes and strategies of the system. The flexibility it generates leads to a meaningful

transformation of the structure, administration, curriculum, and educational agents, and opens the learning contexts and environments to the home, the community and other natural settings. The concept of time shifts from being institutionally defined to respond to the needs and characteristics of the learners, opening access to educational services for women. It emphasizes the learners and the community as the center of the process, sharing the role of educational planners, administrators and curriculum specialists. Conceived this way, integral and integrated community education becomes the most powerful tool for qualitative improvements in the educational processes and outcomes of programs for women. In 1990 at the "Education for All" Conference in Jomtien, Thailand, 155 countries agreed that education for girls and women was the most urgent priority for the next decade.

While progress has been achieved in the past four years, too many countries, including Colombia have failed to live up to their commitment to reduce gender disparities in education, in spite of the emphasis given to national basic education projects, financed with support from the World Bank, the Inter American Development Bank, AID, UNESCO. Most of these "new" Basic Education Projects are working towards achieving better quality in education, but lack the flexibility and cultural relevance, needed to work succesfully with special groups. They are not using the broad framework for education implicit in the Declaration of Basic Education for All.

PROMESA: AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOCUSED ON THE HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN

The main objective of Project PROMESA has been to improve the individual and collective self-concept of families and communities and their ability to identify and solve-problems. It is an integrated community development program incorporating all the dimensions of human and social development: education, culture, health and nutrition, housing, income generating, environment. The educational agents in the program are persons from the community, most of them women, being mothers of the children that participate. The professionals and external agents act mainly as facilitators and catalysts in the process of change. The planning of activities, as well as the allocation of resources, is done with the participation of the people, and all components make use of group rather than individual strategies. The group meetings are designed in such a way that participants start by experiencing small successes that they evaluate, and gradually work toward larger projects and greater successes in this way improving their confidence gradually.

The program works on the assumption that to strengthen families and communities to better attend to the needs of their children, and improve the environment where they grow and develop, they must know what to do, have the ability to do it and the will to do it. This implies that the parents must have self-confidence, they must be self-reliant, and they must have a feeling of being in control of many of the things that affect their lives - concepts which have very often been ignored and which are rarely present among marginal women. To achieve these objectives PROMESA provides the following activities:

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- Parent education on aspects related to the health, nutrition and education of their children.

- Programs on how to improve the quality of life (environmental sanitation, etc.).

- Income generating programs.

- Programs for community leadership and local organization.

The cumulative effects of these programs have contributed to both to women and to the communities in general, developing a better understanding of their context and the diverse and meaningful roles they can play in society. These effects are reflected in:

1. A better understanding of how to help their children and more intellectual ability to do so.

2. A feeling among women of being able to help the family, neighbourhood and community.

3. A belief among women that they can influence people in the family, neighbourhood and community.

4. A belief that they have control over many of the events that affect their lives and the lives of their children.

5. A belief that they are better able to meet the physical needs of their children

Clearly what PROMESA has shown is that by improving the self-concept of women and their abilities to interact with their children, and by changing the negative environment we can make women more self-reliant and create a future generation of boys and girls with a more equitable view and more capable of living and succeeding within their society. As such a new and more meaningful role for women in the rural communities is ememrging, that includes their educational, economic and political leadership.

Some of the most important lessons learned from PROMESA as it relates to women's and girls' education are:

- **To change an unhealthy educational environment for women and girls to a healthy one, requires involving people from all sectors of the community in an educational process that strengthens their self-esteem and changes their attitudes towards education and gender.**

  Since the mother is the crucial person in shaping the attitudes of her children, including their gender concepts, changing the mothers attitudes, becomes a crucial step in improving the education of girls and breaking the inter-generational cycle, that perpetuateds the existing conditions. Following this logic, then, the improvement of girls education, should

start with the mothers from the moment children are born or before.

Furthermore, if women believe that they are inferior to men and behave like their servants, they will pass this attitude to their daughters and sons. These are the kinds of attitudes that many women who are poor, illiterate, and lack the minimal access to power, are inclined to have and with their behavior they reinforce men's behaviour.

- **One educational action, aimed at only a small group of women, will not change an educational environment. There needs to be a critical number of educational actions, addressed towards different people within the community, to have a cumulative positive effect on the environment.**

In the rural areas of Colombia such as Chocó, there is a not a positive learnig environment for children or adults in the families and communities. In fact, we can talk about the existence of a negative set for education. When the parents have less than five years of school and are either illiterate or just barely literate, and they do not need to read, there is often an anti-educational attitude in the home and the community.

Given this anti-educational attitude, a single program for one member of the household is not enough to turn a negative physical and psychological environment into a positive one within a short period of time. To turn the psychological and educational environment around, there needs to be a variety of educational activities for the families and communities. A program that offers a diversity of opportunities for collective reflection, interaction and the planning of activities for different members of the community, can produce the necessa y cumulative effects in the family and the community to make a real difference. When the mother comes home from a meeting where she is learning how to stimulate the intellectual development of her preschool child, and the father comes from learning how to use a chain saw to cut trees and block wood, and the first or second grade child comes home with an educational game to develop logical thinking, then, there is the cummulative effect, necessary to change the attitude in the home; with this happening in enough homes, there is the critical mass to change the attitudes in the community.

- **Rapid advances in education and in creating healthy educational environments for children, especially for girls, in a semi-literate society, can not be made, without focusing innovative educational programs on the mothers.**

The formal educational system often discourages the mothers from becoming involved in a meaningful educational process. The professional teachers, because they have "more education" than the mothers, feel that they can not be helpful in the educational process of their children. What is important to ensure that the process works, is for the mothers and teachers alike, to believe that the mother is the first and most important teacher of her children

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In some respects, the self-concept of adult women can not be changed much without some kind of dramatic experience, but some important aspects of the self-concept of poor illiterate women, such as level of aspiration, self-image and locus of control, can be changed with appropriate strategies. The mother needs to go from have small successes like helping her child learn something or getting good water to drink, doing something with the neighbors, such a draining away stagnate water or cleaning of streets. Then she can work on community problems like getting an aqueduct.

- **To start with the mothers as the focal point, to improve the education of young girls, three things are needed: the mother needs to know "what" to do, she needs to know "how" to do it, and she needs to "have the interest and will to do it".**

Some women have such a low self-concept they can not be reached at the start of a program, while others living in the same conditions have the basic sense of worth, to be able to respond. This is the group to start with and the results will spread. To work with mothers of young children can accomplish two things: a) open the doors for the education of their girls; b) start the beginning of a community reform.

To achieve this, the mother needs to know she can be the teacher of her children and she needs to feel confident about doing it; a notion which involves strengthening her self-concept. If a woman believes that no one listens to her, or that she can not influence people, she can not do much to help her family of community, and things that affect her life, are beyond her control; then she will pass these attitudes on to her children.

- **Sex education must become a high priority in the education of girls and boys.**

One of the major blocks to improving the education of teenage girls, is the fact that a great percentage of them have babies by teenage boys, who can walk away and leave the girl with the problem. Appropriate innovative formal and non-formal sex education programs for boys, girls and their parents need to be devised. This does not seem to be a point that needs to be elaborated upon.

- **To focus on enabling parents to better attend to the physical and psychological needs of their children can be the most effective strategy to attend their own needs, and to break the vicious cycle of gender discrimination.**

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY FORMULATION AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Reflecting on the case of Project PROMESA some important implications emerge for policy formulation and program development with regards to the present condition of women. Clearly we need to move:

1.　**From feminism and programs focused only on women, towards a gender approach**

We cannot ignore the positive role played by feminists during the 1960s and 1970s in terms of creating awareness of women's needs, but unintentially their efforts have led to an approach whose principal victim has been the female. The analysis of the woman's role in society led to a war on sexes and to a view of women's problems as something isolated from her family and community conditions. The efforts for women and by women, centered only on women - a factor which has led to the desintegration of women's conditions. Increasingly, it is becoming evident that there is need to work with a family and a gender focus, where there are opportunities for all to grow and develop the same basic understandings about the problems and solutions for the condition of women.

2.　**From programs that build on the traditional role of women, to programs that prepare women and girls for the twenty first century**

To strengthen the educational opportunities for women and girls, so they become real participants in a more equitable, non-discriminatory and just society, there needs to be a radical change in the approach used to provide education, so that this can lead to a change in the traditional and limited personal, productive, reproductive and socio-political roles that women have been assigned.

The urgency of the problem requires a change in approach, from the identification and the denouncing of the causes of the present conditions of women, to the complementing of these actions with a broader analysis of the relationship of women in society and within the context of the broader societal changes.

The end of the century places us in a complex and contradictory process of development. On the one hand, the scientific and technological revolution is leading to new forms of social organization and to dramatic changes in the structure of the economy, society, culture and political practices. One important implication of all those changes is that they have generated a new way to perceive our individual and social life. The new person needs to develop flexible and open attitudes. Countries which do not comprehend what is happening and do not develop appropriate policies and programs, will lose a vital opportunity to open up a new road toward equitable and sustainable development; they will increase the gap between them and other countries.

The changing conditions of our modern world, require a fundamental change in the role of women. As such, policies aimed at providing educational opportunities and attending to their needs, cannot be based only on questions of sexual and social equality, and justice, but should form part of a strategic plan which includes national, social and economic policies which enable our countries to become competitive within a world economic and socio-political context.

Strong democracies are characterized not only by clear and honest electoral mechanisms, but by having strong justice systems, a reasonable degree of descentralization, an honest public administration, a modern and dynamic legislation, and a strong and efficient means to guarantee equity and non-discriminatory citizen participation.

3.   **From fragmented one-dimensional programs to integral approaches**

Programs should attend in an interrelated way, the different needs of women and girls (personal, social, political, productive and reproductive) and prepare them to become equal partners in society. These final years of the twentieth century are a unique opportunity to jump from the analysis and awareness of the present problems of inequality of women to an integrated approach to place women in condition to play a positive role in the emerging society.

From this perspective, a number of elements are important: the organization of programs for attending to children's needs; the creation of networks for support that enable women to satisfy their needs and those of their children within their communities; the strengthening of programs for attending to children's needs, by incorporating educational components for the women and the family; the consideration of gender in formulating programs for adult education; the designing of appropriate strategies to influence the activities of powerful institutions, such as the church; and the emphasizing of the importance of designing integral development programs focused on different gender needs.

4.   **From rigid formal programs that do not take into account the cultural characteristics of specific groups to flexible programs**

Programs need to be planned with the participation of the women attending them, to respond to their specific needs. The curriculum could have some general areas, but there should also be some specific contents defined in-situ with the participation of those involved. The contents should relate to their needs. Literacy should not considerend as learning to read and write, it should be legal, environmental, social and political Other areas of learning should include income generating activities, leadership and the preparation for their reproductive activities in their own context Ideally the programs should attend in an integrated way to the needs of mothers and children

5.   **From top down programs to participatory programs**

The new model of political participation in Latin America, implies that the State delegates many of its previous functions to private initiative and community activities This process is accompanied by an accelerated process of decentralization aimed at bringing the State and the communities closer together through the local definition of problems and projects, a process through which they hope to achieve greater efficiency in the use of public funds.

It is indispensable to train women to participate in the design, implementation, evaluation and decision making processes and to participate from these benefits, if the new policies are to achieve true descentralization.

6.   **From conventional formal adult education programs with limited perspective to innovative programs that operationalize the guidelines of the Declaration of Basic Education for All.**

Aggressive policies and innovative non formal programs are required to erradicate illiteracy among women. Gender oriented approaches should be introduced in the curriculum, in the analysis of texts and in teacher training. If equal treatment between men and women is not encouraged from an early age in the home and in the classroom it is difficult to change later.

There is need to encourage the training of groups of rural and marginal women, making this a constitutional right, with a percentage of the budget assigned to those programs, and with mechanisms to monitor the implementation of legal reforms and development policies. Also a special effort is required to prevent sexual and family violence.

7.   **From programs planned and implemented without a sound information base to programs that reflect "real" understanding of the conditions of women**

A point which deserves special attention is that of information. At present, there are no mechanisms to collect the type of information that policy makers need to develop a clear understanding of the dimension of women's problems, or to inform women about their options. This lack of information does not permit adequate analysis of gender related problems in the design and development of policies, in order to increase the participation of women in programs and projects.

It is important to influence regional, national, local and institutional systems of information, so that they can start collecting relevant information to ensure a clearer and more integrated understanding of the conditions and problems of women and girls, so that this in turn can be used for the analysis of gender related problems in the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs.

The information must be related to the existence of community and institutional services that enable women to meet their needs for individual development, financial stability and the development of their children. This information is related to the presence or lack of alternatives for attending to the needs of young children, preventative and primary health care of women and children, nutrition programs, and infrastructure for community processes, such as community centers.

It is important to collect information on: the quality of life of women, the status of women in society (legislation, organization, women's programs, policies, labor conditions, rights, etc.)

8.   From educational and socio-economic development programs biased towards men, to programs designed to discriminate positively toward women, with emphasis on special groups such as: rural women, indigenous women, refugees, teenagers and teenage mothers, abused women and women heads of household.

Too often programs have been developed without any regard to the different needs of specific populations. In reality the needs of many of the mariginal groups, indigenous women, teenage mothers, etc. are very different to the needs of other groups.

9.   From no policies or fragmented policies to integrated policies for family, women and children.

An integral approach to women's problems implies the use of strategies that attend in an interrelated way to the different needs of women and of their context: including those related to the different areas of human development (physical, psychological, productive, social, political, legal, ethical). In the process, women should learn the skills and abilities required to play the different roles assigned to them by society: that is as an individual, a social actor, a mother, as an economically productive person.

10.   From government oriented centralized programs to programs facilitated by NGO's.

Decision makers and implementors need to analyze and understand the difference in impact obtained from programs guided by official and non-government organizations, and particularly to take into account the role played by the church in improving the conditions of women.

11.   From a concept of sustainable development based on economic indicators, to a broader concept that stresses human and social development at the local level as the most important dimension.

It is of extreme importance to develop integrated participatory educational programs designed to guarantee that women, girls and other family members participate in them on a continuous basis. There is ample evidence, that programs which involve the parents in meaningful ways in the education of their children, yield the best results and have the best effects on a long term basis. Strategies need to be designed to gradually increase the self-confidence of the parents individually and collectively, so, with increased self-confidence,

they acquire renewed energies to solve their problems and interact with their children in more positive and meaningful ways.

A sustained political commitment requires that womens' concerns become priority in national policies and that financial support is provided. That there are mechanims at all levels to implement those policies and that there are efforts to develop social awareness and commitment on the part of all society to respond to women's needs.

One way to address the existing discrepancies between the formal system and the patterns of women's lives and daily activities is to make a localized analysis of the basic learning needs of women and to plan a formal and informal curriculum to respond to those needs. This needs participation, descentralization, local autonomy and openness and flexibility.

A CALL TO ACTION

Our societies are at risk, and will enter the twenty first century in an even more critical condition unless we assume greater responsibility in creating a more just society for all. This requires that we reconceptualize education, its contents and strategies and give priority to women and girls. To achieve this we need to develop creative new policies and programs focused on improving the quality of life of women of all ages and in all sectors of society.

It is important that we seize this critical moment in history to take individual and collective action, using our leadership role, to influence in our countries and on a global basis, the creation of adequate conditions for the provision of basic apropriate education for women. However, to take actions that can really make a difference towards the future of education for all we need to:

1.   **Set education of women and girls as a national and international priority**

-       Influence the formulation of agressive national policies that open access to educational and social services for the most marginal groups of women in our countries.

-       Establish a plan of action with realistic goals and a timetable that takes the urgency of the problem into account.

-       Establish funding and program implementation partnerships among different agencies such as international funding institutions, foundations, government, non-government and private voluntary agencies.

-       Increase financial aid from national and international agencies for women's programs.

-       Establish a dialogue among politicians, policy-makers and program implementors.

- Assign to every educational, social and economic program a specifically agreed percentage of money for women programs and for monitoring and evaluating their implementation.

2. **Reconceptualize the concept and strategies for women and girls' education.**

   - Organize integrated community development programs that combine formal and no-formal strategies in areas with poor learning environments in order to strengthen women in an integrated way in all areas of development and all aspects of her life

   - Organize programs that attend in an interrelated way to the needs of women and their children and the needs of girls and their younger brothers and sisters

3. **Organize programs that strengthen women's capacities to participate in all aspects of democratic society.**

   - A participatory process aimed at achieving student's commitment, parent's involvement, and women's leadership in educational decision making, policy, planning and management.

   - Organize committees of women and train them to monitor the development of the programs.

   - Organize programs that strengthen women's income generating ability

   - Organize social management and leadership programs for women and finance their projects on an incentive basis.

4. **Develop strategies to improve the access and permanence of women to the educational opportunities**

   - Information, incentives, positive discrimination, reinforced finances, programs geared to improved self-esteem, campaigns to secure cooperation of private interprise, develop social awareness about the importance of women education.

   - Use the mass media and all the social action mechanisms present in society to

     o   Increase awareness about the problems of women at risk and develop public commitment to the cause.

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    o   Develop social awareness about the importance of providing quality education and job opportunities for women.

    o   Develop incentives such as scholarships, that combine provision of job training opportunities with study, to increase motivation for basic literacy and technical training

    o   Use alternative communication strategies, such as interactive radio programs, to reach the most isolated populations like the indigenous women.

    o   Promote the organization of support networks for women to encourage mothers to send their children to school and follow up when the girls drop-out.

    o   Create incentives (scholarships) and especial programs for talented girls from the rural areas and marginal populations. To organize national competitions and use the mass media to disseminate the results.

- Organize flexible schedules and school calendars to respond to specific needs and characteristics of special populations.

- Create positive discrimination strategies in favor of girls and women assigning twice as much budget for their education as for men.

- Design special campaigns addressed at the parents and brothers, so they develop a better understanding about the importance of girls education and change their attittudes

- Develop materials (printed, audio-visual) with case studies of women who have had success in different walks of life and disseminate them widely.

5. **Develop strategies to decrease the cultural barriers that help perpetuate discrimination agains women.**

- Incorporate legal education about women's rights.

- Eliminate stereotypes about women in textbooks and other printed materials.

- Use the mass media to portray a different image about women than the prevailing one in each society.

- Develop policies regulating advertisments and propaganda that distort the image of women.

- Develop educational programs for parents dealing with gender issues.

6. **Strengthen the capacity of universities, research institutions and NGO's to specialized on women's issues**

    - Organize programs with women researchers to promote a better understanding of the situation and design a bulletin to disseminate their ideas. Give women in these programs access to all the new technological advances.

    - Define research on the condition of women as one line of research in existing graduate programs.

    - Evaluate programs not only in terms of their outcomes but especially in terms of the processes that have taken place and have led to those outcomes.

    - Develop strategies to bridge the gap between research and practice and to identify new research projects.

7. **Develop strategies to learn from and use in an aproppriate way the learnings from the last two decades**

    - Identify, systematize and dissemninate information about successful experiences of women programs.

    - Develop a bank of successes and failures, that can serve as frame of reference for new developments.

    - Move from small scale programmes toward larger scale programs that can impact greater numbers of women and girls, using the knowledge and experience acquired in the last two decades.

8. **Innovate strategies for preparing personnel for the new kind of programs**

    - The needed programs for women and girls require a very different type of personnel, for that reason it is necessary to develop new integrated policies for the preparation of personnel, coherent with the new emerging policies.

    - Policies for preparation of personnel coherent with the new type of programs should be developed. These should include curricular reforms of existing programs at the university and high school level in the areas of pre-school education, social work, medicine, nursing, social promotion Some new careers

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need to be established, such as administration and evaluation of gender oriented social development programs.

9.   **Strengthen the capacities of NGO's and other institutions who have programs for women**

Some NGO's like CINDE work on social development projects, graduate programs and other training for personnel of different levels, where they work with women of different sectors of society. They should be strengthened to respond in a more aproppriate way to the needs of women.

-      Strengthen NGO's interested in working with the most vulnerable and at risk group of women

-      Institutions working in child-focused programs should be strengthened so that they work in an articulated way with women and vice verse.

-      Support NGO's in the organization of social management and leadership programs focused on women working on community projects, so they channel their activities on improving the conditions of women.

-      Organize a graduate program focused on women aimed at preparing a) women researchers, with emphasis on doing research on the conditions of girls and women, b) preparing women to develop educational and social projects focusing on the problems of women.

-      Strenghen NGO's in their advocacy roles so that they can develop activities to influence policy formulation and resource allocation including organizing seminars for people at different levels, periodically publishing facts on the evolution of women's conditions, disseminating the results of programs, organizing networks to share ideas and increasing awareness about the needed changes in the condition of women at all levels of society

-      Include in all the research projects the NGO's, an analysis of the progress of women versus men.

FINAL NOTE

"Unless the world community targets female education in creative and innovative ways, this gender gap will continue into the next century". What are needed now are effective plans of action, backed by adequate financial support and solid strategies. Governments have to ensure that education for women and girls is a top political priority. Moreover, they must decide on a dual track approach - universal primary education and non-formal programmes for adults - and

they must put the necessary budget behind it.   Also they must enlist support from the communities, the mass media, the NGO's, and government and private institutions. Furthermore an effort must be made to launch programmes which, to be successful, should include a participatory and integrated approach, involving men.   Innovative pedagogic methods and teaching aids must be used that are culturally relevant and respond to the needs and concerns of the learners and respect their rithm of learning and lead to actions that improve their living conditions. And classes and educational activities should be scheduled when women are most likely to come - lack of time is probably the most important obstacle to get women to attend classes. Programs must be developede that attend in an interralated way to the problems of women and children. Language should be chosedn which motivates the learners to learn. Dynamic female teachers must be selected to make the learners more comfortable which in turn will boost achievement, and incentives should be created for women, their parents and communities to strentghen their continuity in the programs.

Education for women and girls is imperative in promoting quality of life, but it can only make a significant contribution to society if linked up with national policies, programs, development strategies, and structural changes in society, aimed at achieving real cultural, educational and political changes.

By making a collective, long-term committment to the provision of basic education for women of all ages and sectors of our society, we can make a great contribution towards ensuring a better future for many specific groups and for the whole society. However, this commitment needs to be accompanied by a continuous search for expanded financing and strategies appropriate to the ever changing social, cultural, political and economic conditions of the countries.

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EDUCATION AND GENDER
PRIORITIES OF ACTION IN CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

prepared by*

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* The views expressed in this paper, which has been
  reproduced as received, are those of the author and do
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Introduction

In this paper, an analysis is made of the relevance of gender issues to education, in central and East European countries. It is shown that, despite the claimed equality in enrolment, in these countries gender discrepancies exist. During the transition period, the situation may get worse, unless adequate strategies are adopted. Due to the short notice on which this paper has been asked for, most of the statistical data used in analyses refer to Romania. Generally, the situation in the neighboring countries is similar, but differences may also exist. However, information across countries is fragmented, incomplete and hard to get.

Equal Access and Quality

Educational systems were generally considered to be among the few positive features of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs). This assessment was based on the equal access to education, as revealed by enrolment rates. The quality of education was not questioned, or it was considered to be satisfactory, as witnessed by the results of the few students who participated in international olympic competitions on subject matters.

Only after 1989, a different reality appeared: extremely centralized systems, dominated by an ideology seeking uniformization and narrow specialization, under-funding and backwardness with respect to contents, teaching methods and educational technologies (Sandi, 1992).

In spite of the declared equality of accesses, severe qualitative inequalities existed between urban and rural areas, between more affluent and poor urban areas, between different social categories and different ethic groups.

No differentiation by sex seemed to exist. Girls and women represent approximately half of the students at all levels of education, in all the CEECs. Nevertheless, immersed in the collectivist approach, they were not given equal opportunities. This would have meant special measures taking into account the particular position of women in society and especially the cultural traditions and prejudices.

The structure of population in Romania according to the educational level attained reveals important differentiation based on sex. The higher the attained educational level is, the lower is the women's weight. In the total population of women, women graduates of higher education are only 4.7%, whereas in the total population of men, graduates of higher education are 7% (Table 1).

Table 1. Structure of population, by level of education attained, in Romania (Romanian Census, 1992).

Level of education	Female (%)	Male (%)
Higher education	4.7	7
Upper secondary	31.5	44
Lower secondary	35	30.7
Primary	22.3	16.1
Non- graduated	6.5	2.2
Total	100%	100%

From Table 1 it can be seen that 28.8 of women and 18.3 of men didn't attend more than primary education. However, the majority of people in this situation are more than 50 years old (70%).

Illiteracy is higher for women, than for men (Table 2). Again, older women account for the high percentage of 75.8.

Table 2. Sex structure of population in Romania, by level of education (15 and over years old) 1992.

Level	% Female	% Male
Higher education	41.7	58.3
Secondary education	43	57
Primary education	59.3	40.7
Without education	75.8	24.2

In CEECs, no serious gender gap in compulsory school enrolment can be noticed. Female primary school enrolment is practically equal to male enrolment. Also in secondary school enrolment (post- compulsory) there are no major differences (Table 3).

Table 3. Secondary school enrolment rates in selected countries

Country	Total enrolment (%)	Female enrolment (%)	Male enrolment (%)
Bulgaria	73.0	75.0	70.0
Hungary	81.0	81.0	81.0
Czechoslovakia	83.0	85.0	80.0
Poland	83.0	85.0	81.0
Romania	92.0	91.0	93.0
European countries	91.9	94.3	89.5
Italy	75.0	75.0	75.0
United Kingdom	83.0	82.0	85.0
France	95.0	98.0	92.0
Netherlands	96.0	95.0	98.0
Developed countries	90.3	92.0	88.6

Nevertheless, economic pressures in the region start leading to falls in school enrolment, even at primary level. Harmed are especially children from disadvantaged groups, such as gypsies, but no differentiation by sex can be traced.

Secondary education- non-appropriate profiles

In 1993/1994, in Romania, of the total graduates of lower secondary schools (gymnasium), 63% girls were admitted in lyceums, 12% went to vocational schools and 13% to apprenticeship schools. Comparatively, 45% boys were admitted in lyceums, 32% went to vocational schools and 13 attended apprenticeship schools.

If there is no sex discrimination concerning access to education, differentiations exist concerning profiles of schools selected. In Romania, at secondary level, girls attend mostly theoretical schools, the profiles of professional and vocational schools being less tempting. Despite the equal enrolment rates in lyceums, there are differentiations on profiles selected.

Girls prefer generally the pedagogical and sanitary profiles, but quotas for these profiles are very low (5% of the total places for upper secondary schools). Other preferred profiles, such as post and telecommunication, food, light industry, are offering only 10% of the total places. In Hungary, in trade, economy, postal services technical secondary schools, 80-90 % of the students are girls.

The undergoing process of shifting the weight from heavy industry profiles to service sector profiles may encourage more girls to attend technical and vocational schools and thus have a better chance to find employment.

Higher education- need for career counselling

Higher education was considered as an asset for finding employment. However, the present negative feedbacks from the labor markets in the region may discourage girls from enrolling in the future in higher education.

Private universities were initially seen as a healthy alternative to the state system. However, at least in Romania, they turned out to be mostly profit-oriented, offering a second chance to students who failed entrance examinations in state universities.

Private universities tend to have a majority of female students, according to some estimates 63 % (Grunberg, 1994). This is due to the fact that girls, who are generally interested in certain faculties (foreign languages, linguistics, international relations, sociology) which have allocated fewer places than technical faculties, are more likely to fail examinations and search for a refuge in private universities. Nevertheless, as accreditation processes are still not initiated, there is no guarantee on the quality of education in these universities and no recognition of diplomas.

The percentage of girls attending different profiles of higher education is remarkably constant in time (Table 4).

Table 4. Evolution of percentage of girls in higher education

Profile	1989/1990	1992/1993
Technical	37.8	38.3
Economic	70.2	72.4
Medical	60.0	59.0
Law	61.0	64.0
Artistic	62.0	63.2

Educational Reforms

All educational systems in CEECs are engaged in reforming processes. Although priorities vary from one country to the other, everywhere the key words are democratization, decentralization, liberalization and pluralism (Birzea, 1994).

The abolition of the state monopoly is sure to open more space for creative solutions. However, if not carefully monitored, the process may lead to the appearance of unintended, unexpected

effects, harmful to girls. Until now, gender and impact studies are lacking from the analyses which lead to policy formulation and projects and programs choice and planning.

CEECs continue to allocate very low budgets to education. According to the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook (1991), the percentages from GNP allocated to education by different countries were the following: Bulgaria 6.9%, Hungary 5.6% Czechoslovakia 5.2%, Poland 4.4%, Romania 3.12%.

At times when the economic situation is difficult, families are more conscious about the costs of education and may take decisions which are unfavorable to girls. Such developments are very likely, as the employment market is sending mixed signals to young students.

Employment and unemployment

Despite their relatively high level of education and skills, women face nowadays more difficulties in getting employment. Before 1989, in CEECs with planned economies, it was possible to automatically allocate jobs to students upon graduation, on the basis of the ear-mark grades. This system, through which girls (who generally had higher marks), succeeded to get employment, is no longer possible in a market economy.

Female unemployment, among those aged 29 and less is in Romania three times higher than male unemployment (for graduates of secondary level education). Focus groups conducted with young unemployed women by the UNDP/Women in Development unit in Romania showed that the informal information sources young women have access to (mother, sisters, friends), are not capable to connect them to the job market. In addition, the newly established private enterprises, which form the most dynamic sector of economy, are reluctant to employ women. Employers fear that, due to childcare and household responsibilities, women would be less productive.

During the present crisis, with fierce competition for resources, most women are marginalized. The unemployment rate for women has risen faster than for men, being twice as high as the rate of men unemployed. The feedback from the labor market may have in time a negative effect upon the strong motivation to attend schools and the high value attached to education, which traditionally existed.

Until now, opinion polls suggest women want to work. In Bulgaria, only 20% of working women expressed the willingness to stay at home (Staikova- Alexandrova, 1991). In Romania, 80.8% of the respondents in a national survey (1994) said they agree with the idea that women should work outside the household. In the same survey, 87% of the questioned people considered that women are working because they are interested in a source of income and only 10% thought they are interested in a career.

Women constitute a high per cent of the paid workforce, but are concentrated in the least skilled and lowest status jobs. Women dominate employment in the service sector: education, health, social care, where they represent over 70% of all employees. Although the trend is for a decline

in heavy industrial sectors, traditionally dominated by men and an expansion in the other sectors, where women have experience, they still may face difficulties, as men will try to change occupations.

Further Education and Training

Functional illiteracy is one of the main problems in CEECs. The transition to democratic societies, based on market economies mean a vast process of retraining of practically the entire population. In this process, men have again more chances to adapt, as they are more involved in politics and have better chances to be employed.

Although the state is operating several programs of retraining and further education, the most efficient ones are those directly organized by enterprises. Joint venture firms are interested in quickly adapting the workforce to new requirements. Therefore, they invest in training programs for their employees, who are generally men. Women are once again loosing a chance to remain competitive. This situation may prove to be especially dangerous in the long term, as technologies and organizational procedures are changing very fast.

A possibility for women for not lagging behind men is to start up their own business, in the private sector. Here again, in addition to all the specific barriers they encounter (absence of credits, difficult access to resources and markets), they are faced with the lack of entrepreneurial and managerial skills.

The need for special training programs for women, in small and medium size enterprises development was expressed by many members of women NGOs in Romania.

Further education and training for women is needed in most fields. Thus, training programs for improving women's productivity in agriculture and agriculture processing may give women in rural areas a chance to improve their lives. Education in reproductive health, family planning and child care could compensate for the lack of knowledge due to the on purpose ignorance of these areas important to women.

Strategies of Change

Women problems are interlinked. One cannot address one of them, such as education, disregarding the others. Employment and unemployment, leadership and decision making, education, health, family and domestic violence are interrelated issues, asking for comprehensive solutions. The Women in Development unit in Romania has developed a strategic approach aimed at improving women status, taking into account different dimensions (Sandi et. al., 1994).

Opportunities for greater involvement of women in politics may lead to a higher priority given to women issues. The lack of women representation in decision-making in education may account for the low profile of the gender and education issues at present, in Romania. Despite

the fact that women are the majority in the educational profession (more than two thirds), there are very few in policy and decision- making positions. In the Ministry of Education, no woman is present at higher levels of decision- making and there are only 34.4% women inspectors (Novak,1994).

In the strategies of change, some of the following suggestions may be included.

Education should be used more to eliminate gender stereotypes, by means of adequate curricula, textbooks and teaching methodologies.

Teacher training and retraining programs should include subjects related to gender issues.

It is necessary to strengthen the data and information on which the policy formulation and action strategies rely. Data on education and labor market should be desegregated by sex.

Access should be provided to documents and materials on gender issues published by the UN, EC etc.

Technical and vocational schools should diversify their profiles.

Higher education institutes should support applications from women, offering appropriate subjects of study.

The whole society should be sensitized on the importance of raising women's status. Greater discussion should be encouraged, as well as greater public awareness of the role of women.

Government commitment to gender issues should be enhanced. The organizational capacity and effectiveness of women NGOs should be strengthened. Community level organizations should be encouraged to develop self-help women's activities.

Gender studies units and women's research centres should be supported.

It is necessary to improve access for women and girls to information, by developing career counselling services aimed at meeting the particular needs of women. They should provide job market information, trends in labor markets and salaries, for getting a better sense of gaps and redundancies.

Women should have an equal access to further education and training. Training provided by employers should be offered also to women and paid from the social protection funds.

Women's potential as entrepreneurs should be enhanced by means of special training programs.

Final Remarks

In CEECs, the areas where action is urgently required in order to accelerate female education are:

development of an unbiased curriculum for primary and secondary schools;

diversification of the profiles of technical and vocational schools, in order to make them attractive to girls;

provision of career counseling to young women seeking enrolment in higher education;

provision of further education and training that will equip women for the transition to a democratic society and a market economy.

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**CHALLENGES IN FEMALE EDUCATION:
RATIONALE AND STRATEGIES**

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* The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Without education, development will not occur. Only an educated people can command the skills necessary for sustainable economic growth and for a better quality of life". (World Bank, 1987)

The quotation above, issued by the President of the World Bank, Barber B. Conable, summarises the importance of education for development. It cannot be disputed that a nation cannot attain full development without educating all her human resources, who are in the end the actors of development.

A review of worldwide research on education indicates that there is a gender gap in the absolute numbers of children enrolled in schools and colleges. This gap gets widened when we look at data on persistence and achievement in our schools. A review of enrolment rates reveals that girls are disadvantaged with regards to both formal and informal education.

Gender equity in very critical in most countries including mine where women comprise at least half or more of the population. Any development strategy that fails to recognise this is guilty of denying its population the change to achieve its full potential. This is not bad news for women only, it is bad news for the whole country or the whole world community.

2. RATIONALE FOR ADVOCATING GIRLS AND WOMENS' EDUCATION

Research conducted in the last two decades seem to assert that women could have a greater role in the development of nations and a greater share in the benefits therein if their role in the family and society and their capacity to increase productivity were better articulated and understood particularly by policy and decision makers. This fact coupled with the current emphasis on the need for girls and women's education should compel us to articulate a rationale for the need to focus on women's education.

2.1 Economic Rationale

The economic rationale is sometimes known as the Human Resources Development Justification. Research has highlighted the fact that people are the most precious resource of any country, therefore, the provision of education, health care, good nutrition and safe water may initially be an expensive welfare measure, but in the long run, by improving the strength of the work force, they are a wise use of resources.

It is also widely acknowledged that education contributes directly to economic development. There is also evidence that education yields information, facts, ideas that enable women to make more informal and efficient choice in productive and consumption of goods and services. Thus, a reduction in costs, time and energy.

Researchers also assert that education of women, helps increase agricultural productivity because educated women have more access to information, extension services and training. They are also better able to utilise new ideas and technology.

There is also accumulated evidence that education enables women to engage in various economic activities. This is partly because education provides the women with necessary credentials for employment and partly because it also provides strong inducement to enter the labour marker.

The economic rationale is based on the premise that there is great loss of development opportunities for a nation as a consequence of ignoring women's vital role in society.

2.2 Self-Actualization Rationale

The self-Actualization or self-image rationale is based on the premise that women are people who should be seen and perceived in their own conscious beings not necessarily seen or thought of as

"mothers", "producers", or "housewives". Just like men, women have self-Actualization needs that have to be fulfilled if they are to live a full and satisfying life.

Education provides a means to the achievement of self-Actualization which in turn increases self-confidence and improve self image. Kainja (1990) contends that education brings about attitudinal changes such as greater awareness of women's role in the family and community, more participation in decision making, increased capability or organising oneself for universal problem solving and the need for more participation in family, local and national settings.

2.3 Social Rationale

Women by virtue of being members of the Prime Socialising Institution, the family are the first and probably the only educator that some children every came across. Therefore, education for these socialising agents is imperative. Current studies have indicated that education of the parents, particularly the mother is the strongest predictor of the children's educational participation since there is a higher likelihood of sending their children.

Female education also increases the demand for services. It is access to information which may assist a woman achieve social policy objectives particularly in areas such as population control (Subharao et al 1992), health, nutrition and environment which eventually affect the macro economic development.

Social rationale is based on the premise that full participation of women in development process cannot take place if women are not involved in decision making, implementation and evaluation at the family, community and national levels. To accomplish this, women just like men must be mobilised, sensitised and properly trained.

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Equity is no charity. It is an obligation. Nations ought to aim at equity in all aspects including education because the nation as a whole runs more efficiently and becomes better off when its productive assets are broadly distributed. Countries as politically diverse as China, Japan, South Korea and Finland have demonstrated this.

2.4 Morale Rationale

Moral rationale, sometimes known as the human rights rationale is premised on the universalistic principal of human rights. *"Every human being has the right to education"*. This argument continues to say that even if women's education did not lead to quantifiable productivity figures, discriminating against women is unacceptable in a democratic world.

It is desirable from a moral standpoint that women should be given equal opportunity in education. Just development calls for an effective partnership between men and women and this is possible through education of both. This in turn enables a nation to achieve democracy in its broader sense.

Summary

This section concludes that the impact of women's education on the well-being of women themselves, their families and the wider society is both multi-dimensional and complex. USAID (1990) did an analysis of the various processes by which this impact is made and they highlighted the possible channels by which women's education affects women's economic contributions which result in improved economic well-being of women as individuals and members of their families, communities and society in general.

Figure 1 summarises this section. The bottom line is if a nation invests in quality women's education, it generates quality human capital which generates surplus resources.

3.   OBSTACLES TO GIRLS AND WOMEN'S EDUCATION

At the turn of the last decade, several researches had a closer look at the determinants of educational opportunities, aspirations and achievements. Their findings demonstrated that sexual differentiation and ideology negatively determine the direction of girls education and their career choices while boys educational aspirations are positively enhanced.

The Multidimensional Economic Impact of Girls' Primary Education
(ABEL Project, December 1990)

Primary Education of Girls

Quality of Primary Education
- Education and structure
- Quality of teachers
- Access to material inputs
- curriculum content

Skills information
- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Skills to perform standard tasks
- Enhanced ability to :
  - perceive and process new information
  - communicate with others
  - evaluate and adjust to changes
  - adopt new technology
  - reduce subjective uncertainty

participation in labour force

Nonmarket and home Production

Wage Employment Opportunities (Rural and Urban)

Higher Productivity (Output)

Higher Wage earnings

Participation in Self Employment and Informal Sector

More Access to Credit

Higher Productivity (More output)

Higher Entrepreneurial earnings

More efficient performance on :
- domestic work
- child care
- consumption choice (e.g. health and nutrition)
- lower fertility
- production of
- Goods for home consumption (eg gardening)

Gain Access to Independent Income (Individual Level)

Meet Household Basic Needs (Family Level)

Higher Productivity and growth (Community and National Levels

The representation of girls has improved over the years such that standard 1 enrolment in most countries in the developing world as a whole flow approach parity, while this data would appear to indicate nearly or equal initial access of girls and boys to primary or basic education, the rate of drop-out after the first three years is higher among girls than boys.

Such data compelled researchers such as Kainja et al (1990), Davison et al (1990) to examine gender differences in patterns of educational persistence even after school entry is achieved in Malawi. Findings from these studies seem to indicate that :

(a)   while senior classes have also shown improvements in girls representation over time, enrolment figures still exhibit marked disparities by gender. In 1988, girls represented 44% of total standard 5 enrolment while for standard 8, this figure was only 32%;

(b)   regional variations in enrolment rates by gender also prevail. Rural primary schools indicate a higher disparity (43.6%) between boys and girls enrolment than in urban schools (49%);

(c)   there is also disparity in access to secondary schools. In 1988, girls represented 35% of Form 1 students which was an achievement resulting from affirmative policy favouring the girl students;

(d)   there is substantially higher drop-out rates among girls than boys. Annual drop-out rate for girls over all primary classes averaged 15% of girls enrolled in the previous year. While for boys, it was 11%.

A review of literature from all regions of the world seem to reveal that girls are disadvantaged with regards to both formal schooling and informal education. A number of factors that impinge upon girls' education have also been highlighted. Some of these are :

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3.1 Economic Obstacles

In most countries, cost sharing policy education is effective. Consequently, when there is a choice to be made between sending one child to school because of limited funds, the girl child is the likely one to stay at home. Further, when economic duties call at home, the girl child is almost always called upon to absent herself from school in order to attend to these.

A study which was conducted in Malawi by Kainja et al (1991) found that 31% of parents interviewed indicated that they would prefer to send their sons to schools, but only 10% expressed preference to send daughters and 59% reported that they would try hard to send both boys and girls to school.

Priotisation of expenditures has also been viewed as effecting girls' education. Given that the costs of educating girls is no greater than for boys, it is clear that the argument of "lack of school fees" for girls masks other factors related to the priotisation of expenditures. Researches have revealed that family's available resources tend to be distributed according to anticipated returns to investments. Hence the foregoing of outlays for girls' education when resources are scarce and returns are perceived to be low.

At a national level economic factors also play a very important role in encouraging or hindering access to education. An analysis of public expenditure on education by major world regions during the period 1980 to 1989 gives us clues as to where the cause of under enrolment and underachievement lie.

Table 1 indicates that contrary to expectations, developing countries in general maintained and even slightly increased public expenditure on education, expressed as a proportion of their national incomes, during the 1980's. These funds merely maintained expenditure shares and in most cases, these meant a reduction in absolute terms as increases in income were often

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less than national increase in population.

Table 1 shows that public expenditure on education per inhabitants in Sub-Saharan African fell by more than one half between 1980 and 1987-9. In Latin America it fell by 11 per cent between 1980 and 1987 but regained their 1980 nominal values in 1989. However, in Arab countries there was an increase of 20%, and the rest of Asia and industrialised countries by more than 66%.

A consequence of this reduction was a fall in the quality and quantity of educational services which in turn resulted in higher drop out rates, lower achievements rates and low enrolment.

In 1991 UNESCO conducted a multivariate regression analysis using data from eighty two countries, highlights of which are outlined below :

3.1.1   in general, countries with low enrolment ratios tend to have low per capita incomes. Succinctly countries which are very poor find the provision of schooling opportunities for a given proportion of the population more difficult than those which are not. Thus, restricting access;

3.1.2   all low income countries face budget constraints which prevent the provision of schooling. Countries such as Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Tanzania, Liberia, Mali and Burkina Faso, although considerably smaller proportion of government expenditure, relative to GNP, was allocated to primary schooling, than average of 1.6% went far in order to reach UPE. This achievement can be attributed to high commitment on the part of the government to achieve UPE;

3.1.3   countries such as Rwanda, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Yemen Arab Republic and Sudan required much more

effort to reach UPE. Public expenditure on Primary schooling equivalent to between 3 to 7% of GNP would be required. This high unit costs of schooling could, therefore, act as a deterrent to achievement of UPE;

3.1.4   universal enrolment in schools is not only achieved by the supply of school places, but also by the demand by households. Therefore, low demand for schooling which could be a function of opportunity costs, lack of appreciation for schooling or lack of role models, was found to be a reason for low enrolment in schools.

3.1.5   although under-provision of school facilities in Africa is critically important determinant of low GER's for both sexes, girls would abstain from enroling where distances to the nearest school are high.

Table 1

Public Expenditure on Education as % of GNP			Public Expenditure on Education by major world regions		
1980	1987	1989	1980	1987	1989
Africa exluding Arab States					
4.7	4.8	4.8	32	15	15
Asia excluding Arab States					
4.6	4.4	4.1	37	58	67
Arab States					
4.4	6.6	6.3	112	134	131
Latin American and Carribean					
3.8	4.1	3.9	88	78	87
All developed countries					
6.0	5.9	5.2	469	704	787

(Source : UNESCO 1991 Table 2.12)

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3.2   Socio-cultural Obstacles

Social cultural factors prevent girls from entering the school system and once they enter, some drop-out due to pregnancy or early marriages. Obura (1993) reports that there are on the average 8,000 school girls who became pregnant every year and these are likely to be unwanted pregnancies.

A study of relevant literature suggests a very complex picture of social causes and effect of girls low enrolment, persistence and achievement in schools. A synthesis of this picture indicates that :

3.2.1   social factors could influence the demand for/and the supply of schooling opportunities;

3.2.2   the conditions which influence the supply and demand also generate a set of effects which though they are similar for boys and girls, they usually differ in degree;

3.2.3   opportunity costs of sending girls to school are higher than those for boys. Research conducted in this area suggests that girls, particularly of primary school going age, spend significantly more time on household chores than boys (Kainja et al, 1990, Davison et al 1990);

3.2.4   educating girls is considered neither profitable nor predictable but is considered risky because girls do not usually go far with education and if they get pregnant, their status is lowered and this may affect their bride prices in some societies. Thus female education is assigned a lower value;

3.2.5   poor support facilities and resources for maintenance of girls education (knowledge and skill) is also considered an obstacle;

3.2.6   strong socio-cultural attitudes often put greater restrictions upon the education of girls. Some of these are special needs for physical protection and protection of girls' reputation.

Some national cultures require that girls be taught by women rather than men. The school system may fail to provide these special requirements or, decision and policy makers may not acknowledge these special requirements. Consequently, parents are unwilling or uncomfortable to send their daughters to such schools;

3.2.7   journey times to and from school also may hinder girls more from attending school than boys;

3.2.8   in some sub-cultures, girls grow up in an environment which sees school as a place for men. Girls are constantly reminded of their place in the home. Thus, they develop a self image that is in conflict with formal education, and consequently, drop out of school at the earliest convenience;

3.2.9   in some cultures, initiation ceremonies are in conflict with school calenders and girls are required to withdraw from school. On return to school girls may fail to cope with the gap in content covered while they were away. This may lead to drop-out.

3.3   School-related Obstacles

The fact that the male/female enrolment ratio is sometimes not responsive to the expansion of school facilitates is an

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indicative of the presence of systematic biases which depress the demand for girls education compared to that for boys.

Cross-country regression analysis of data available seem to indicate that :

3.3.1   school policies such as :

(a) expulsion from school when a girl is found pregnant cause girls and sometimes boys to drop out of schools;

(b) the enrolment of girls in secondary or tertiary education if low due to limited facilities or places can discourage girls to enrol or achieve at primary level.

3.3.2   inefficiencies in the school system, lack of teaching and learning resources, and teachers' attitudes towards girls education discourage girls;

3.3.3   stereotyping within the curricula, textbooks and subject choices either confirm or further narrow the chances of girls using their schooling in the present or future;

3.3.4   in some countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is a pattern of low teachers' expectations for girls performance in mathematics and science;

3.3.5   lack of formal career guidance and role models in primary and secondary school is also attributed to low girls enrolment and achievement.

Summary

The factors affecting girls school enrolment, persistence and achievement include institutional policies and practices and home and community based economic, Socio-cultural factors. The discussion above shows that the detailed reasons why many children remain out of school are complex and differ from country to country. This discussion has also concluded that a wide range of supply and demand factors affect enrolment outcomes of both boys and girls but that there are a set of economic, social, cultural, political and institutional factors which tend to depress overall enrolment of girls relative to boys.

The importance of these factors vary sharply from country to country and between regions within a country. Consequently, country-level analyses are required in order to determine the causes and to facilitate the selection of appropriate policies to combat them.

Figure 2 summarises these macro and micro level factors of supply and demand affecting girls' education.

Figure : 2

Illustrative Macrolevel, Supply, and Demand Factors Affecting Girls' Educational Participation

MACROLEVEL FACTORS

Economic Development

Industrialization   Urbanization

GNP   Religion

SUPPLY FACTORS   DEMAND FACTORS
(School Factors)   (Household Factors)

                          OUTCOMES

Policy environment: Policy environment:
UPE, compulsory   free vs. fee education
education, entrance
criteria, pregnancy   Household and family
policy, quotas   structure:
                          ACCESS   parental education,
                                         income, occupation,
School places and   residence, family size
proximity   and composition
                          PERSISTENCE
Type of school: Direct costs of schooling:
religious, single-sex,   tuition, fees, uniforms,
coeducational   supplies, food
                          ACHIEVEMENT
School attributes: Opportunity costs:
facilities/infrastructure,   household responsibilities
organization,
completeness
                                       Labor market
School quality: opportunities
material inputs,
curricula relevancy
                                       Social beliefs/practices:
                                       marriage age, purdah,
Teacher attributes: role of women,
gender, attitudes,   dowry/brideprice
behavior, experience

Note : Adopted from Abel Research Study 1991

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4. IMPROVING AND INCREASING ACCESS OF GIRLS AND WOMEN TO QUALITY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

It is becoming more and more clear that the early notion that "our projects will be more effective if the people understand them better and take charge of their implementation" is adequate. But, the realisation that "our projects will be better if they are based on the people's own identification and analysis of the problems they face and their solutions" is also required.

Thus, before we can make any recommendations on what needs to be done to improve the access, persistence and achievement of girls and women in both formal and informal education, we need to analyse what the perceived problems and needs of girls between 12 – 25 years, both in and out of school. Research that has been conducted in the last decade contends that women may be aware of the underlying causes of their low education and poverty and what their needs are. Research has also informed us that women may be aware that their vulnerability, isolation, low education, sickness, low income, meagre assets, their exploitation conspire against them. One wonders why they still remain in that status. Well, they remain there because their way is usually blocked partly because of lack of resources and ignorance, and partly because some do not believe there is anything they can do about it. They lack confidence.

Permanent solution to the gender-based discrimination cannot be expected to come from outside the society which is experiencing discrimination. They have to emanate from within. Therefore, it follows that the cultural, social economic and political base of that society and gender relations should form a subject for discussion to ensure full exposure of the perspective of the problem. This exposure is important if we have to avoid coming up with projects that are disconnected, isolated, irrelevant and conceived in the absence of a broad place strategy.

4.1 Needs of 12 – 25 year Old Girls and Women

Cultured economic and social changes that have taken place in the last three decades have necessitated the redefining, reordering or rearrangement of social relationships, structures, organisations, systems and functions. As a result, the education and training of girls and women are affected.

The sharply differentiated sex roles and responsibilities of women and men influence resource allocation and constraints of women. Gender differences result in different abilities, access to resources and incentives of each gender to acquire education and training.

Urbanisation is also playing an important role in changing the Socio–economic set up in many developing Countries. Women are increasingly forming a good proportion of the labour force. Consequently, women work longer both at work and in the home. This has resulted in children, particularly adolescents, often having nobody to turn to with respect to preparation to adulthood. Unfortunately, most curricula are overcrowded, therefore, the school is unable to make up for the youth's lost opportunity. Hence, the youth turn to the "Society of the Street" for information and skills.

The introduction of market economy has brought with it distribution problems which affect women and children in particular. In addition, cash or formal economy requires complex skills and knowledge which calls for appropriate training and education.

Socio–economic changes have worsened the situation of women and children. Urbanisation, restrictive structural adjustment policies, migration of men have left women stranded with very little support, meagre material means, increased responsibilities and ill–equipped to cope with the change and its evolving problems.

Because of all these changes there is, today, a more acute need for appropriate education programmes directly linked to everyday living skills and the capacity to adapt to change.

Figures 3, 4 and 5 summarises some of the needs of young women as individuals and as members of a family which have resulted from the changing role of the individual and family and the problems that come with the changes. These have implications for eduction of women and mother of the family.

Fig : 3

AREAS OF CULTURAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE — THE INDIVIDUAL AND THEIR
RESULTANT NEEDS

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │  THE   INDIVIDUAL        │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                               │
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │ . Age (development)      │
                    │ . Sex                    │
                    │ . Status                 │
                    │ . Culture                │
                    │ . Environment            │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                      /                    \
        ┌─────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────┐
        │  PROBLEMS        │        │    NEEDS         │
        └─────────────────┘        └─────────────────┘
```
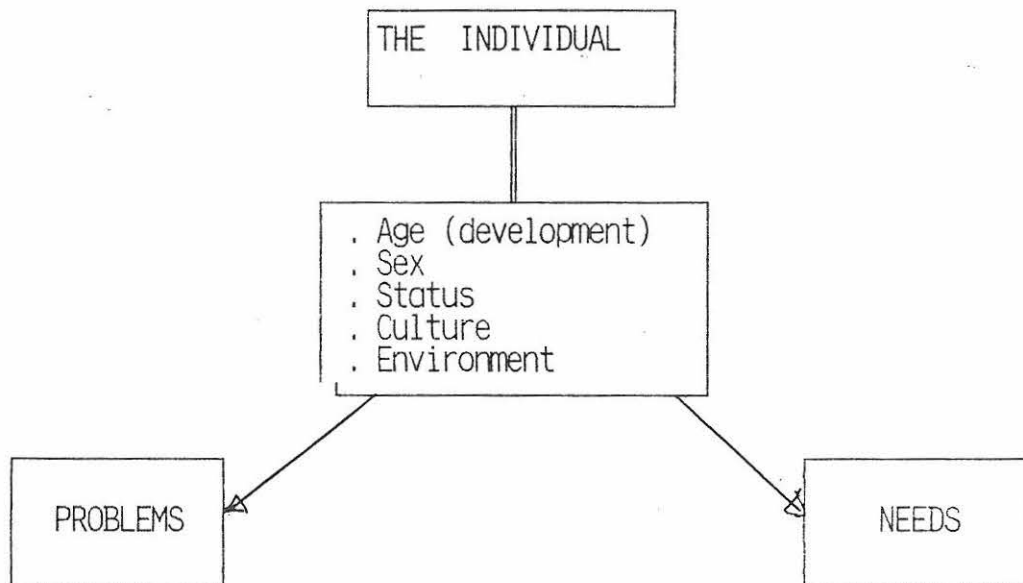
. Decrease in maturing age   . Family Life Education
. Rural–Urban   . Proper education for
  migration   productive work
. conflict with   . support from family
  authority   and society
. school drop out   . opportunities for
                                                continuing education
. marriage and family formation   . iGAs
. Unemployment   . Establishment of informal
. Underemployment   economic sector
. Deviance   . Employment
. Family not providing   . Counselling; Career,
  all answers   social
. Income level   . More complex skills
. Individualism

(Source : Kainja P 13)

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Fig : 4

<u>AREAS OF CULTURAL SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE — THE INDIVIDUAL AND THEIR RESULTANT NEEDS</u>

THE FAMILY

. Role and function
. Size
. Concept (Extended/nuclear
. Mutual support system
. Methods of earning a living
. Subsistence (cash economy)
. Role of family members
. Socialisation Roles
. Family Life Cycle

PROBLEMS

NEEDS

. Problems in discharing its duties
. Time together as family
. Moral degration
. Rural-Urban Migration
. Rural-Urban dichotomy

. Values
. Identity
. Economic problems
. Relative importance
  decreasing
. Preparing youth for
. adulthood
. family size
. Resource distribution
. cross cultural influences
. loosening of moral standards

. Support from Society
. Society to take over
  what families can't do
. Creation of IGAs
. Providing meaningful
  future for youth
. Child spacing facilities
. Social Services
. Purpose for living
. Other institutions
  to provide education
  for various roles

(Source : Kainja 1990)

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CEPTUAL MAP FOR DESCRIBING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF WOMEN

The ultimate purpose of all womens Education is SURVIVAL and to enhance women's role as contributors/beneficiaries of development

Educational Needs for SURVIVAL and Effective participation

Skill Training

Sensitisation

Adoption of new Attitudes/values

Imparting of relevant knowledge and information

To Act more Effectively in The Following Socio-Economic Roles in the Family and the Community

eserving ironment natural sources

Assuring family food security

Improving family Health Hygiene Sanitation

Planning the desired family size

Assuring Childrens total development and education

Earning controlling income and other economic assets

participating in civic life

communicating more freely decision-making self-actualisation learning how to learn

(Source : Kainja, 1990)

4.2   Strategic Resource Allocation

In the last decade, the decline in the flow of public resources to education has been sharp in Latin America and enormous in Africa. This decline has resulted from broad changes in Macroeconomic and not merely educational policies. Many countries in the developing world have witnessed large currency devaluations as part of economic adjustment programmes. The end result of these changes is that the quantity and quality education services have declined.

Zimbabwe's success story in increasing the GER in the early 1980's is attributed to strategic resource allocation. Before her independence, resources for education were profoundly maldistributed and heavily oriented towards the white community but immediately after her independence, Zimbabwe's system was changed to an open access to education for all, and where all who so wish, may proceed to secondary school after completing primary schools.

Ghana too provides a success story where efficiency savings were obtained from pre–university school cycle reduction and introduction of double shifts at primary level.

These and many more examples show that resource re–allocation if properly done can achieve quantitative and qualitative education for both boys and girls. However, due caution should be applied to ensure that quality is not compromised.

To achieve improved and increased access of girls to education and training, general policy changes have to be effected to ensure that resources are strategically allocated. Some of these policy considerations are :

4.2.1   raising of additional financial resources for education and particularly primary schooling (Arab countries). Through taxation for example;

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While increasing resources for primary schooling does not necessarily end in reaching UPE, it demonstrates the governments commitment to school for all;

4.2.2 reducing the total cost per school leaver through changes to the organisation and length of the school cycle (Ghana);

4.2.3 re-distributing expenditures towards primary schooling from other sectors;

4.2.4 reducing unit costs of schooling through double-shift teaching, increase size of class where applicable;

4.2.5 shift the costs of education to households who can afford by encouraging increases in private schooling and passing on education cost to users – university education;

4.2.6 reducing high repetition and drop-out rates currently prevailing in most schools particularly in the Sub-Saharan Africa.

Colclough el al (1993) have made a summary of cost-saving, cost-shifting, quality-enhancing reform policies that countries can consider and adapt to suit the Socio-economic and political environment. These are summarised in Table 6.

4.3   Increased Motivation

We have witnessed, particularly, in Africa the exhortation of leaders to put girls and women in school. However, school attendance has not increased appreciably as a result of these publicities or campaigns – why?

A search of literature on more than eighty countries seem to suggest that :

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4.3.1   schools have not been transferred into environments that would welcome girls and women;

4.3.2   schools are still inappropriate for women. This perception is constantly ignored by policy makers. Obura (1993) contends that girls will never be right for school until school is right for girls;

4.3.3   too little attention is paid to the needs of women. Consequently, school projects do not really benefit women, they focus on those easy to reach boys and men;

4.3.4   education without other facilities such as motivation, resource, referral and counselling services etc cannot attract girls or precipitate development;

4.3.5   attainment of primary education certificates does not necessarily provide an opportunity for girls to attain adequate knowledge and skills in formerly living, communication, self confidence, income generation and decision making i.e. in most cases, its curriculum is inappropriate and irrelevant;

4.3.6   some girls are still walking dangerous paths to school and once in school, they are increasingly at the mercy of dominant boys and male teachers. Therefore, there is high level of danger, lack of personnel safety and stress associated with girls going to school coupled with anxiety of mothers over the moral development and safety of their daughters.

Therefore, what needs to be done to increase motivation of girls? Obviously, we have to address all the issues as stated in 4.3.1 to 4.3.6 That is, school environment ought to be improved, the curriculum should be reviewed for gender sensitivity and

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relevance, needs of women should form part of the consideration in educational planning, provision of continuous or continuing education to given girls and women something to look forward to.

To achieve what is stated above, we need a concerted effort of the whole family, community and nation. Further, we need co-operation and collaboration of all governmental and non-governmental organisation (NGOs) departments because although all programmes of family planning, child care, nutrition, health care and IFGA are extremely important, they are neither effective nor sustainable without a sound base of female education.

An adoption of UNICEF policies and strategies for promoting girls education would also help to solve the problem of motivation and promotion of girls education (UNICEF Draft 4/2/94.

Initiate policy dialogue and advocacy to promote :

—   Girls and women's education with the entire range of involved ministries, NGOs, womens' groups, religious organisations, industry, commerce, local communities, parents etc;

—   building and strengthening of partnerships on behalf of g i r l – c h i l d r e n   a n d   w o m e n   e . g . school/parent/community/government/donor partnerships;

—   providing joint networking, policy planning and monitoring within sub-regions, regions to maximise technical co-operation;

—   sensitising education managers, head of teachers and all associated with matters of education. FAWEs Ministerial Consultation on School Drop-out and adolescent pregnancy, in Mauritius 15 – 18 September, 1994 is a very good initiative to this end. For research shows, the critical role that educational leaders such as Ministers play in

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monitoring and enhancing girls education;

- reviewing and modifying of curriculum, both content and pedagogical aspects to ensure that it is gender sensitive;

- addressing the special needs of girls and women, for example by relieving girls and women of child care by providing child care facilities, and incentives to stop girls from dropping out at an early age;

- offering well thought out scholarship programmes for capacity building;

- strengthening data collection and analysis including desegregation of data, sharing of data and findings to enable countries to better monitor programmes on girls education;

Succinctly, what is advocated here is policy formulation, development and advocacy, institutionalising capacity building and field support, partnership building, community participation and mobilisation.

Activities have to be worked out to implement these actions, with an emphasis on reduction of gender and geographical disparities.

4.4   Innovative and Cost-Effective Strategies

This discussion has eluded to the system-wide improvements that would benefit girls and equip them to cope with their changing economic and social environment. In this section, we will look at specific examples of innovative and cost-effective strategies that can increase female enrolment and access, quality and curriculum relevance, attainment and performance of girls and women in education and training.

4.4.1   National and International Machineries

Effective mechanisms are needed at the community, national, regional and international levels to serve as catalysis for promoting women eduction and advancement of women. For example, the world conference on Education for All at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 provided all nations with a "Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs". This conference acted as a catalyst for national action. Hence, the prolification of networking groups and forces created at all levels.

In Africa, female educationalists have taken up themselves to put their commitment to girls education through the "Forum for African Women Educationalists" whose main mission is to support girls and women to acquire Education for Development.

At the international level, both UNESCO and UNICEF provide for global sharing of information and experiences.

The Donors to African Education (DAE) has also contributed to the enhancement of girls education through the DAE Working Group on female participation. Among its priorities, this working group, is research and information networking.

At the regional level, in addition to FAWE, we have UNESCO, UNICEF, FEMMET, MEIDA, ECAMSEA, ERNESA, AAS, AAWORD and URTNA. All these organisations provide network of education for development, useful information and findings of research, they also strengthen other national networks for effective dissemination of information on education in general and female education in particular.

4.4.2   Policy Directions

A wide range of policy recommendations on girls education has evolved in recognition of a vital link between female education and national development, and in response to global demands for respect for human rights in general and girls rights to education in particular.

Policies regarding girls education should be considered in a multi-sectoral perspective within the education sector and other related sectors such as labour, health, judicial, commercial and industrial sectors.

Various policy reforms have been formulated and implemented in a number of countries with varying success stories.   A close look at some of these reforms will be done in this section to encourage their adoption and adaptation by other countries.

(i)   Re-admission of mother-girls into the formal education system

Guinea and Malawi are implementing this policy reform.   Their degree of success has not yet been evaluated. Senegal permits re-application for school admission   after   presentation   of   marriage certificates;

(ii)   Increase in education budgets to allow greater access of girls to primary education

Quota   systems   or   positive   discrimination   or affirmative action with their various advantages and disadvantages and connotations have been implemented in a number of countries such as Kenya, Malawi,

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Ghana, Guinea, Zimbabwe, China, Sri Lanka, Columbia and Senegal;

(iii)   **Incentives and concession to female teachers in remote or rural areas**

Sri Lanka, Columbia, China;

(iv)   **Re-allocation of resources within education budgets to promote science and mathematics programmes for girls**

Malawi has a scholarship for girls who opt to take courses in "non traditional areas" such as mathematics, engineering at the university level. Papua New Guinea positively discriminate in the selection of grade six girls;

(v)   **Social Mobilisation and third channel initiatives (Private Sector)**

Malawi has witnessed the opening of private schools totalling to 30 within two years (1992 – 1994);

(vi)   **Primary education levies on tax payers**

China has implemented this policy since 1976. Under the arrangement designed to promote basic education, China derives its income from five main sources :

a.   the national government, country or municipal;

b.   local education taxes levied on industry and other economic enterprises by local authorities;

c.   people education fund based on income tax paid by state employees;

d.   factories and other enterprises support schools attached to them;

e.   donations from individuals and organisations.

(vii)   **Official recognition and support of multiple delivery system**

With expanding population and diminishing educational budgets, educational planners are turning to a variety of creative solutions to increase educational opportunities. Some of these are :

a.   <u>Multi-grade classrooms</u> — Colombia, Escuela Nueva Programme;

b.   <u>Strategic School Placement</u> — Egypt, Indonesia, Philipinnes, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh;

c.   <u>Programmed Learning</u> — Colombo, Liberia, Philipinnes, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh under "IMPACT", Jamaica, Liberian Improved Efficiency of Learning Project (IEC). The Liberian case seems to conclude that programmed instruction enhances student achievement while concurrently increasing the gender gap;

d.   <u>Flexible Scheduling</u> — Colombo;

e.   <u>Compulsory Education Legislation</u> — Turkey, Shri Lanka, Indonesia, Guinea. However, compulsory education legislation does not ensure equal access to schooling as was the case in Egypt (1924, Mali (1972), Afghan (1976).

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(vii) Making School Acceptable

Day or boarding schools, religious schools, single or co-ed schools, appropriate facilities eg. fences for girls, female vs male teachers.

(v)   Helping girls learn inside the classrooms

Through stereotype elimination very early in the schooling process.   Biraimah (1987) (USAID 1991) contend that when girls begin their educational careers,   their   achievement   level   classroom participation and career expectation are quite similar to boys with maturation and increased years of schooling, gender differences increase.

(x)   Curricula Relevance

Botswana, Malawi, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Morocco have programmes in the names such as course option, schemes, GABLE, Science Clinic, Indigenous Technology and   Industrial   and   Commercial   Sub-training programmes, respectively.   These programmes have taken remedial measures to redress the gender imbalances in maths and science.   Care ought to be taken when planning such programmes to avoid dual tracking in the educational system, with "relevant" schooling   becoming   synonymous   with   "inferior" schooling.

4.4.3   Organisational Reforms to Improve quality of Girls Education and Training

Government create laws and re-allocates country's resources, which are important functions but partial requirements for effecting a development strategy. Further,   many   countries   have   undertaken   policy

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revision and policy changes to improve education but because of limitations to organisational and institutional reforms, their full effectiveness is hardly recognised. Below are some examples of organisational reforms that seem to work in improving the quantity and quality of girls education.

(i)   Institutional of Research

The inavailability or inadequacy of the data base on girls education seems to suggest the need to create and strengthen research units in either Ministries or in the universities. In Malawi with the establishment and strengthening of the Educational Research Centre and Centre for social research by Government with assistance from the World Bank and UNICEF respectively, we have seen a growing increase on research on gender issues and access to date which has stimulated further research and policy review.

There is need to strengthen local, regional and international research centres to ensure qualitative and quantitative research are conducted and to encourage cross-country studies that would facilitate multivariate analyses.

(ii) Improvement of Primary Teacher's motivation and Performance

In most countries, teachers are not rewarded according to performance and this leads to frustration and dissatisfaction with a likely consequence of lowering of quality of education. Several steps have been and should be taken to redress this situation.

Improve basic pay of teachers. In some countries,

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teachers are rewarded according to their level of education and training which is similar to all civil servants. In others, a higher salary scale in recognition of teachers difficult working conditions, is administered. In China, by 1990 in many areas, teachers ranked in the top half of public sector salary earners, and with some fringe benefits such as health care, travel concessions. This has improved the quantity and quality of the primary education system in China.

In countries such as Columbia, teachers earnings have been reduced by changing the structure of the profession towards a more intensive use of lower-cost personnel. This is achieved by reducing the average training background of the profession without affecting teacher quality or performance.

Senegal and Colombia have increased the proportion of "assistant teachers". It is reported that this has contributed to a reduction in unit costs with no noticeable negative impact on quality. For most Sub-Saharan African countries, this would be a very dangerous reform because the proportion of untrained or insufficiently educated teachers is already large.

Therefore, there is need to study the conditions prevailing in a country before recommending such policy reform which could result in lowering educational standards.

(iii) Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Pupil-Teacher ratio can reduce and increase unit cost of schooling. Colcough (1993) indicated that about half of the Sub-Saharan African countries for which data was available had a pupil-teacher ratio of 37 to

1. In this case, an increase of 20% to this ratio he contends, can reduce unit cost by budgetary savings. On the other hand, in other countries such as Malawi, pupil-teacher ratio is alarmingly very high. It is averaged to 70 to 1. Here, what is required is reduction of this ratio to improve quality of education. This would result in budgetary deficits of would require cost reduction in other areas such as cost of structures or cost sharing at tertiary level of education.

Re-deployment of teacher can also reduce or increase pupil-teacher ratio. In Senegal, re-deployment of 1,260 administrative staff into the teaching force reduced overheads.

(iv) Improving Internal Efficiency

Countries will vary in which organisations reforms would offer the most-effective means of improving internal efficiency. For instance, reduction of the annual number of teaching days and silmuteniously improving teacher attendance and full utilisation of teaching days.

Multiple shift schooling, reduction in repitition and teacher requirements all seem to reduce both recurrent and capital costs of schooling. Evidence from Malawi and Somalia seems to point to the fact that reduction of boarding schools would achieve cost reduction.

4.4.4 Linkages between Education and Productive Work

The enhancement of links between schooling and work should be advocated to ensure relevance of education and to reduce the costs of schooling. In Africa, there has been

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resistance to the enhancement of these links mainly because of what is termed as the "Certificate or diploma disease" — academic schooling is rewarded more than vocational skills.

Experience from Papua New Guinea, Zambia and many others indicate that one needs to be aware of the limitations of innovating that link schooling with productive work. Too much emphasis on production may lead to the dilution of learning to practical tasks with resultant little coherent skill acquisition. The school may be lacking in materials and tools to effect the links. Productive activities are usually non-examinable, therefore, students and parents may see as wastage the utilisation of time for productive activities. Sometimes business may want to protect certain skills and thus making them unavailable to students.

Work experience schemes or what is known as attachments is another way of forging links with the world of work. In these programmes unit costs of schooling is shared with organisations that benefit from students work. In addition to cost reduction, work experience contributes to community development, character building, and national unity as well as acquisition and transition of useful skills.

Summary

In this section we have highlighted the many educational and fiscal reforms which countries can choose from in order to redistribute and reduce cost of schooling. Some of these reform require trade-offs with other priorities in the budget. Few of these reforms are costless, some will be resisted because of their seemingly threats to quality of education.

Whichever reform would be considered for adoption, care should be taken to ensure that social economic, cultural and political considerations are taken into account. Failing to do this would jeopadise the success of the reforms.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper has devoted its space to asking and answering questions pertaining to girls' and womens' education. A wealth of information and data now available on female education has sensitised us to the sexual differential and disparity that exist in our educational systems.

Because of this sensitisation we are now seeing resource mobilisation at local, national and international levels to try to bridge the gender gap in education that has come as a result of social, economic, cultural, political and institutional insensitivity to the needs of women.

As discussed, the factors underlying the girls differential access and persistence in education are very complex. Therefore, there is need for a closer look at these factors through several lenses — multi-variate analysis if we are to recommend reforms or measures that would achieve equity in access, persistence and achievement in education.

The rationale for investing in female education has been articulated in this paper. Research has informed us that investment in female education is the most decisive intervention in a society, because it assists the nation in achieving all other desirable national goals. Experience in many developing countries has helped policy and decision makers to realise that without female education, all other social, economic, political and environmental pursuits of a national either fail or are rendered unstainable in the long run.

In the era of running diminishing resources and rising debt burden, we need a comprehensive policy analysis and reform to ensure quality education for all. This has been compounded with the realisation that necessary financial resources are just a start rather than the end of the task at hand. We, therefore, need a multipronged approach to this task. We need a more efficient approach to programme planning and management. We need policy reform and implementation by all partners in education — both old partners such as donors and multilateral agents

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and new partners such as other service organisations, the non-governmental organisations and the private sectors.

Some innovative strategies which have been tried in various countries have been highlighted in this paper. However, there is need to analyse the prevailing conditions at national and local levels before adoption. The policy reforms suggested above affect both the supply and demand side. It would be futile to effect demand reforms before ensuring that the supply side is very good study material in few years to come as demand in schooling has been radically increased by the introduction of free education while the supply side remains intact.

Finally, to succeed in improving and increasing access of women to quality education, there is need to apply John Clark's 5 Ls, those are:

- Listening to allies and critics;
- Learning through improved research and evaluation;
- Linking - building networks and broaden coalition for effecting change;
- Leadership- fostering leadership from among women. Capacity and institutional building;
- Hobbing - to influence those in access to much greater cloat and resources.

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TRANSFORMING EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Fourth World Conference on Women, to take place in Beijing 4-15 September 1995, will culminate in a major document, the Platform for Action. The purpose of this report is to serve as input to the Experts Group Meeting which will help to develop a draft of the Platform. Guided by the intent expressed by the Commission on the Status of Women, this report focuses on two objectives:

- diagnosis of the critical areas of concern to women in education, and
- identification of practical steps and specific actions to bring about change in each of these areas.

This report defines education as the set of information, knowledge, messages, and representations that are conveyed to both young and adult individuals of society, either via established institutions such as schools or through nonformal education programs and the media. This broad definition of education is crucial for both conceptual and logistical reasons. Formal schooling serves mostly non-adults; yet, there is a large number of adult women in serious need of systematic knowledge and skills. In today's world, minds are subjected to influences from various sources among the mass media; to produce tangible changes in women's education, it is necessary to be alert to all these sources and to work with them.

1. MAIN EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS ACROSS REGIONS

1.1 Access

Over time, all formal educational systems expand. This occurs because educated parents seek education for their children and because there is a strong societal belief that schooling is a critical element in social mobility and in the acquisition of citizenship--an ideology found throughout the world. With the expansion of enrollment, girls' enrollment has also grown. Today's enrollment rates for girls and women at all three levels (primary, secondary, and university or tertiary) in most countries are greater in absolute and relative terms than they were 10 years ago.

These increases have resulted in gender parity in primary education in many developing countries, though girls are still seriously under-enrolled in a large number of African and South Asian countries.[1] Gender parity is also being attained in secondary schooling but important regional differences exist: Latin America and East Asia show equal proportions of girls and boys; substantial gaps persist in Africa and South Asia. In higher education--the level where most economic and political leaders are formed--women's enrollment lags considerably behind men, except in a few Latin American countries. Africa is the region with the smallest representation of women in higher

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education, at about 31 percent of the total enrollment. Table 1 below shows recent enrollment patterns throughout the world. These figures reflect gross enrollment rates, which not only exaggerate the level of access to schooling by including in their count repeaters and overage students but are also subject to overreporting by teachers and schools whose resource allocations are linked to student enrollment.

Table 1. Global and Regional Women Enrollment as Proportion of Total Enrollment by Level of Education (1991 data)

Region	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary	
	TE	%W	TE	%W	TE	%W
World total	620,969	46	306,463	44	64,854	44
Latin America & Caribbean	76,618	49	23,151	51	7,771	47
Arab states	30,523	44	16,213	42	2,509	36
Asia	363,209	45	178,586	41	22,163	35
Africa	108,869	45	81,103	42	25,012	31

Source: Computed from raw data cited in UNESCO, 1993, pp. 2-11 and 2-12.
TE = Total enrollment in thousands.
%W = Percentage of women's enrollment as proportion of total enrollment.

It is well known that differential access to schooling is also affected by residence (urban/rural) and by social class. Gender inequalities in education are felt by all women, but some inequalities are clearly felt more by poor and rural women. These groups are the most likely to be illiterate, not to have access to training programs, and to be relatively absent at the university level.

Approximately 300 million school-age children did not have access to primary or secondary education in 1990; two-thirds of these were girls. The majority of women over the age of 14 in many developing areas have never been to school. The proportion of women who are illiterates parallels that of out-of-school girls: both two-thirds. As a result of the lack of access to school by some girls and, increasingly, the low permanence in schooling by other girls, the problem of illiteracy continues. The illiteracy rates, usually obtained through census interviews, tend to underestimate the true prevalence of illiteracy. Although people manage to survive without literacy skills, their possibilities for full participation in contemporary society are highly diminished.

1.2 Participation

While access simply indicates students' enrollment at one point in time, participation considers the extent to which

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students remain in the system and successfully complete their education. Important indicators, such as dropout, repetition, and completion rates, reveal a less optimistic view than the enrollment numbers. Unfortunately, these statistics are not regularly gathered by national systems of education and often are not broken down by sex.[2] It is estimated that one-third of the children in developing countries who enroll in primary education do not complete this cycle. While boys exhibit greater dropout rates in settings where there is great demand for their labor (as in pastoral lands in Botswana and Lesotho, or in the informal market of some urban centers, such as Sao Paulo), the global statistics indicate a higher rate of discontinuity by girls. More populous developing countries such as India and China exhibit a lower rate of maintenance in schooling by girls. Repetition rates worldwide tend to be higher for boys than girls; this does not reflect a lower ability on the part of boys but a willingness of families to invest more in the education of sons than daughters. It should be noted that the number of years of schooling is an important determinant of literacy skills; in an increasing number of developing countries many of the current illiterates are persons who were in school too briefly to reach a literacy threshold.

One of the most discernible demographic trends in the world in recent decades is the growth of women-maintained households. These households register lower incomes and higher rates of unemployment than those of married women, even though they have higher rates of participation in the labor force. The impact of this phenomenon on future public and private investment in women's education is yet to be ascertained.

1.3 Achievement

Being female is not associated with poor performance or low intelligence. While in industrialized countries, girls and boys show comparable academic achievement in primary schools and girls decline in high school, in developing countries there tends to be a higher achievement by boys at all levels, particularly in science and math. The reasons identified for this gender difference in academic achievement include reduced opportunity for girls to learn, less prepared teachers serving girls, absence of support systems for learning, and the absence of meaningful role models. An even more problematic area for girls and women concerns the topics that are covered in the curricula as well as the topics that are avoided in them.

1.3.1 Curriculum

In addressing the problem of gender in education, one has to look beyond access and completion, to probe <u>what is actually learned</u> and <u>how it is learned</u> through the schooling or training experience. Curriculum is an essential element: "Curriculum empowers and disempowers, authorizes and de-authorizes, recognizes and mis-recognizes different social groups and their knowledge and identities" (Connell, 1994, p. 140).

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Analyses of program content and textbooks have occurred in several countries. The findings are remarkably consistent in showing that there is a pervasive presence of sexual stereotypes and bias in reading, history, and social science textbooks. The offering of courses that tend to segregate students along gender lines has diminished but there is little evidence that new courses dealing with the social relations of gender such as sex education, legal literacy, peace education, etc. have been designed and implemented.

However, very limited research has been conducted on classroom dynamics (teacher-student and student-student interactions). The available evidence (coming mostly from Latin America--which as noted has achieved parity in access to primary school)--suggests that teachers behave differently with boys and girls and that boys overall receive more cognition-related attention. These findings parallel results detected in analyses of U.S. classrooms over the last 20 years.

The training and retraining of the teaching force to consider issues related to gender has been minimal. Anecdotal reports indicate that few efforts in this direction have taken place, but there are practically no instances of nationwide efforts to deal with teacher training concerning gender awareness and gender equity in the classroom.

1.3.2 Fields of study

As a consequence of the weak interventions to promote gender equity in schooling content and practices, of the prevalence of stereotyped messages and images in the media, and of the general lack of contestation of societal norms and ideologies concerning women and men in society, those women who finish their secondary education internalize beliefs regarding what are "suitable" fields of study (and thus occupations) for them. Looking at the changes over the last decade, it can be seen that while the numbers of women in higher education have increased, choices of scientific and technological fields of study continue to be uncommon among women. Some of their field-of-study choices are not destined to foster national development. A case in point is the field of agriculture: while most developing countries have serious needs for technological improvements in the field of agriculture and a substantial number of women work in agriculture, very few women are trained as agronomists or extension workers.

Changes in technology affect women more than men, as inventions tend to substitute machines for labor. Because of the vulnerability of women, they need vocational and technical training that qualifies them for the changing labor force. Adult women, therefore, should constitute a crucial element in any educational plans and policies regarding national development.

In all, the condition of women in education indicates a

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steady and slow progress in terms of access. This access, however, has been achieved mostly at the lower levels of their educational path. The educational experiences of girls and boys in the classroom remains practically unmodified, while courses and textbooks continue to provide content, representations, and accounts that tend to reproduce traditional beliefs and attitudes regarding notions of femininity and masculinity as well as the role and status of women and men in society. A reflection of this emerges in the very limited number of women in scientific and technological fields of study.

2. EFFORTS TO ADVANCE THE CONDITIONS OF WOMEN DURING THE PAST DECADE

2.1 Promoting Advancement in Education

It may be useful to recall the various ways through which the advancement of women in education may be assessed and/or promoted. Quantitative indicators are the most commonly used means to measure women's improvement in education. These indicators are:

Access: Enrollment rates of women in the various levels (primary, secondary, university) and types (formal [academic, vocational, technical] and nonformal) of education.

Wastage: Rates of girls who drop out or repeat in primary or secondary education. It is very important to distinguish between repetition and dropout rates when looking at gender outcomes. Since parents tend to invest less in the education of girls, girls repeat less than boys because parents remove girls from school when they fail. Since parents invest less in the education of girls, girls tend to evince greater dropout rates than boys.

Completion: The proportion of women who complete a given cycle of education. This is important because rewards from education accrue not from years of education but from level completed.

Of these three indicators, only access is regularly measured. Limited data exist on repetition rates disaggregated by sex; dropout rates are seldom gathered by national systems. Few countries report completion rates by sex.

In addition to the quantitative indicators described above, there is a second set of efforts, more medium-term in effect, which could also reflect improvements in the education of women. They are the following:

Curriculum Changes: Changing course content to delete sex stereotypes and to promote the concept of equal opportunity for women and men. This is central to the education process because it is through the curriculum that formal knowledge is

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transmitted. Curriculum changes refer here to two complementary actions: adding new courses to the programs of studies in schools and training centers, and modifying existing courses. The provision of courses can be implemented in two ways: (1) by enabling girls to gain access to all courses and programs presently available through the educational system, and (2) by providing girls with courses especially relevant to them (sex education, legal issues, feminist theory, and reconceptualized fields such as science, history, economics, etc.). The improvement and addition of current courses implies revising or modifying textbooks so that messages and images containing sexual stereotypes about women and men are removed, and ensuring that the presence and contributions of women in past and contemporary society are recognized in balanced ways.

Teacher Training: Working on both pre- and in-service training to provide teachers with knowledge about the social relations of gender (theories and practices), about practices in the classroom regarding gender equity, and new content about women and men in society. The capacity of teachers to deal with gender issues will be critical in the creation of non-sexist educational environments and classrooms. Since classroom innovations are likely to succeed only if they are compatible with teachers' existing beliefs, changes in the curriculum will have to be accompanied by reshaping the training of teachers toward a gender-sensitive education and toward their own understanding of the various social relations of gender.

Incentives: Providing girls and women with direct economic payments (scholarships, reduced fees, monthly stipends, free textbooks and educational materials) to enable them to attend school while not creating an economic burden for parents.

Supportive Mechanisms: providing girls and women students with parallel services such as closer schools/programs, female teachers, school meals, boarding facilities, school bathrooms, counseling, and childcare services to facilitate their continued school/program attendance. Providing female teachers with safe and adequate housing.

It should be noted that the effects of this second set of efforts cannot be measured completely through quantitative indicators; rather, they require detailed narratives of procedures and practices in educational and training settings.

2.2 The Forward-Looking Strategies

Undoubtedly the most crucial official source guiding interventions in various social and economic spheres of life in favor of women was the Forward-Looking Strategies document produced at the UN Third World Conference on Women held in Nairobi in July 1985. This consensually-approved document (henceforth referred to as FLS) addresses mostly formal education (schooling) but it contains some references to nonformal education (aimed mostly at adult women). The document is

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especially rich in the identification of measures to improve the education of women. As Table 2 shows, over 50 paragraphs address issues that go beyond mere access to regular education. These measures include incorporating women into scientific and technological fields, affecting curriculum by providing new courses and modifying existing subjects and programs, and setting up mechanisms to facilitate women's access to and permanence in educational settings.

Table 2. Paragraphs in FLS Containing Measures of an Educational Nature

Measure Proposed	Paragraph Number
Access to schooling	116, 287
Access to scientific and technical fields	141, 149, 163, 170, 171, 182, 183, 186, 189, 191, 201, 203, 206, 209, 210, 218, 223, 276, 268, 293
Completion of studies	165
Literacy	164
Adult education	165, 270, 336
Curriculum content	82, 83, 150, 157, 163, 164, 167, 173, 256, 272-275, 287
Curriculum (Women's Studies)	168, 171
Teacher training	165
Incentives	163, 165, 166, 268
Supportive mechanisms	163, 165, 166, 169, 171, 285, 295
Education/work link	172

Note: Paragraphs dealing with education in the FLS section called "Education" include numbers 163-173.

The FLS recommendations for education are numerous in the area of curriculum content. Recommendations focusing on formal schooling highlight the need to review textbooks to remove sexual stereotypes, to include more balanced references to women in historical roles, and to foster an increased presence in science and technology and in peace efforts. Regarding adult women, the recommendations call for new knowledge in such issues as legal literacy, women's health, peace, and family planning,[3] and the inclusion of courses dealing with women's rights, parenting (requested for both women and men), agriculture (irrigation, tree planting), construction and maintenance, water management, and energy.

It is interesting to observe that the FLS document does not make a specific demand for parity of women's enrollment in primary, secondary, and university education. It merely calls for "equal opportunities" for access to resources, especially education and training. The FLS document does consider questions of completion (repetition and dropout) and the need for teacher training, but only in brief references.

FLS also identifies the role of media in education, calling for the inclusion of more women in communication/media training programs, changes in the portrayal of women as sex objects and stereotypes, and elimination of violence against women (Paragraphs 85, 206, 207, 288, 369).

From a feminist perspective, the educational measures proposed by the FLS, while in need of greater specification, cover most of the crucial points of intervention in both formal and nonformal education.

2.3 What Has Been Implemented During the Last 10 Years?

Being a product of the deliberation of governmental agencies, the FLS placed inordinate hope in the will and competence of the state as key implementor of its recommendations. Nine years later, it was stated at the 38th session of the Commission on the Status of Women--the body charged with monitoring the implementation of FLS and the preparation of the Fourth World Conference on Women--that there was "slow progress in the implementation of the Forward-Looking Strategies" (CSW, 1994, p. 15).

In 1990 the Commission on the Status of Women considered a report, The Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women document (CSW, 1990), which was an interim report on FLS implementation after 5 years. This document, using reports supplied by national governments (about 40 percent replied), gives evidence that some change has taken place in formal education. However, it also shows that this change has affected only a small number of countries and few countries seem to have engaged in a comprehensive strategy to advance women's education. The measures adopted include the introduction of new curricula regarding parenting and special courses on women's issues in colleges and universities, the promotion of women's participation in high technologies, and the provision of training projects in new technologies and marketing techniques. Only one country reported efforts to recruit women to top positions in school administration (CSW, 1990, p. 55). Most of the reports emphasize trends in educational access. Regarding adult education, many developing countries reported expanded literacy programs for adults, especially for rural women, noting that these programs focused on health, nutrition, and home economics (CSW, 1990, p. 55). No indication was given of the number of women reached through these literacy programs; generally, such programs are very small and limited to a few geographical areas. Work with the mass media appears to have been more substantial, as several countries trained media personnel to produce balanced depictions of women and engaged in TV campaigns dealing with equity, equal pay, minority women, and abused women (CSW, 1990, p. 60).

The national reports prepared in 1994 for the Fourth World Conference on Women do not offer a departure from previous approaches. An examination of nine of these reports (albeit a

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small sample) shows almost exclusive emphasis on enrollment and no mention (except in the report of one country) of measures to affect women's participation and achievement.[4] Reading the reports, it is as if FLS never existed.

A conclusion that can be drawn from the above discussion is that while the FLS document was rich in the identification of efforts required to promote women's education, the reports from the few national governments which replied indicate that the interventions that took place were limited both in number and scope. Access, the most frequently reported indicator, reflects improvement of girls' participation in schooling. As noted earlier, enrollment gains are inevitable and can be attributed to a variety of factors. Since many of the other efforts recommended by the FLS document were not realized, it can be argued that state responses by and large have been more symbolic than real. Moreover, there is reason to believe that unless new strategies for implementing the recommendations are considered, state responses will remain the same.

3. FACTORS IN EDUCATIONAL CHANGE PROCESSES

The introduction of measures in educational and training settings to advance the condition of women must be seen as a form of educational change or innovation.

The literature on educational change often reveals the role of outsiders (particularly intellectuals, political representatives, and grassroots groups) in bringing new ideas and practices into school settings. Organizations tend to create inertias that make them impermeable to internal pressures for change. Since established bureaucratic practices are disrupted and challenged by new ideas, it is safer to ignore them. The literature on educational change also observes that the more complex the change, the less one can force it. The limited literature regarding change in gender-related education reveals an even greater reluctance to change, as many of these efforts challenge well-entrenched beliefs and call for the remaking of meaning.

3.1 Factors Supporting and Opposing Educational Change

Research has identified a number of factors that promote the implementation of innovations. These include: a perception of need, clear specification of the innovation features (key roles, practices, procedures, content, evaluation), organizational incentives to engage in the new behaviors (training, financial and nonfinancial incentives), increased ownership of the innovation by its implementors, ongoing technical assistance, and permanent monitoring (Fullan, 1994).

After many years of promoting educational innovations in the West and seeing their poor implementation, observers of change processes have concluded that the teachers are the essential

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piece in the transition and that teacher training deserves much more attention than it has received heretofore (Fullan, 1993).

Support from the leadership of the institution involved is a powerful incentive to foster the implementation of innovations: the role of local educational authorities and the principal at the school level appear as important. Principals shape the organizational conditions needed for successful implementation, such as shared goals and procedures for monitoring results. In the case of gender-related innovations, the limited evidence (mostly from the U.S.) suggests that women administrators tend to be more receptive to change than do men.

Social movements have functioned as a major source of pressure for both responsiveness and change in educational systems. Evidence from diverse settings such as Brazil and India indicate that grassroots movements in education and literacy have been successful in causing political authorities to augment school facilities or to provide literacy programs.

An educational innovation, be it new practices within the classroom or new content in courses, has to be seen as involving a complex set of actors and actions. Although those who put an innovation into practice (teachers most often) like to modify it by including procedures more suitable to them, lack of information about the details of the innovation will function as a critical impediment. In those circumstances, teachers end up reverting to the use of familiar practices.

A common problem that blocks gender-oriented innovations is lack of funds. While some educational innovations can be translated into new procedures that may use limited additional funds, most efforts to change imply the deployment of considerable financial and human resources. For instance, the revision of textbooks should lead to an identification of more appropriate textbooks to replace existing ones. Decisions to train teachers in the social relations of gender and gender equity in the classroom will necessitate budgets for workshops. Some of this training will have to be ongoing, which will result in additional budgetary demands. While funds are needed, these could be reduced through contributions in kind by parents and communities, and through the involvement of NGO workers as consultants.

Ideological and cultural beliefs, long internalized as "natural," often prevent transformations in both schools and training programs. Politicians and decision-makers often blame pressures to change the social relations of gender on "Western" influences (and therefore not felt by women in their own countries) or to consider them "unnecessary" because the education and training currently offered are seen as the most adequate and relevant to their society. In some cases, principles of "cultural autonomy" are invoked. It can be shown, however, that cultural practices, norms, and mores tend to reflect power arrangements in society rather than an innate state

of affairs.

It has also been observed that pilot studies of innovations are usually successful. Difficulties emerge mostly when "going to scale"--i.e., in the process of moving an innovation to national coverage. What is needed in these cases is the need for greater participation with government of a broader range of actors through partnership and alliance of different kinds, at different levels of the system, and at different stages of the innovation process (Shaeffer, 1994).

Innovations also face problems that are specific to poor countries. Developing countries often lack curriculum development facilities, teacher training facilities, control and support agencies, and mechanisms for the collection, analysis, and reporting of basic statistical information on their educational systems (Vedder, 1994). This condition plus the various other factors identified above difficulties in the implementation of innovations. This is highlighted not to generate pessimism about change but to underscore the importance of considering the many forces that impinge upon transformative processes in the school system as well as those forces that cling tenaciously to established traditions in the face of efforts to alter social meanings and perceptions.

3.2 Levels of Response to Gender-Sensitive Educational Change

Before we move to the discussion of possible strategies to advance the condition of women through education, it may be useful to review the various responses to women's needs that occur in practice. There are three levels of response to women's inequality in education and training, moving from the simplest to the most transformative:

First level: responses that (a) open the schools to girls, i.e., do not deny access; (b) provide knowledge for women in their current capacity as mothers and household managers, or that (c) consider women's current physical and psychological constraints (imposed by cultural norms) and reduce women's domestic labor. Examples of this first-level knowledge transmission would be providing skills in nutrition, hygiene, childcare, health, sewing, family planning. It also includes giving women low-level production skills so that they may join the informal sector of the economy. Examples of the measures that remedy physical and psychological constraints would be: establishing classes closer to the students' homes, setting a flexible schedule of classes, providing more female teachers, building schools with greater physical security or bathrooms for girls, setting up single-sex schools, and offering afternoon classes for adult women (a time when married women are more available).

Second level: responses that seek to give women opportunities to reach the same types and levels of education and training as men. This would include removing from textbooks

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sexual stereotypes and images that convey an inferior or passive view of women; providing stipends and scholarships to enable girls and women to continue attendance in educational programs; promoting girls and women's retention in nonconventional fields of study so that they may move into occupations that are correspondingly nonconventional for women; implementing measures (e.g., quotas, scholarships) to promote the presence of women at the tertiary levels of education and in post-university training so that women may move to positions of leadership; providing counseling and related supportive services to facilitate women's choices of new fields of study; and moving women into administrative positions so that decisions affecting school experience and programs may be more gender-sensitive.

Third level: responses that challenge the ideological and material conditions that support women's inferior conditions in society. This implies transforming the social relations of gender through interventions in mass media, economy, education, and family. It calls for reformulating messages and images of women not only to remove sexual stereotypes but to present alternative ways of conceptualizing personal identities and collective relations in society. Measures of this type within education would include efforts to remove sexual stereotypes in textbooks and replace them with accurate and alternative representations of men and women, to train all teachers in gender analysis and non-sexist practices, to develop a strategy from preschool to high-school to foster in girls a predisposition toward science and technology, and to provide women with knowledge and skills that would enable their empowerment, i.e, a sense of control over their own lives. It would also imply providing concrete situations for the enactment of new values and attitudes, for instance, enabling women to become school administrators and to attain other positions of authority.

The empirical evidence to date indicates that governmental interventions tend to concentrate on the first-level strategies and to engage in second-level strategies primarily when supported by international assistance (Stromquist, 1994). Third-level responses are addressed by women NGOs in terms of strategies of program objectives and content. But, to the extent that third-level responses call for widespread interventions in society, the work of NGOs constitutes a relative small effort towards change in the social relations of gender.

4. STRATEGIES FOR ACTION; IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

Often identified in the literature as effective strategies to improve the education of girls and women are the creation of a political will and the involvement of the community. From this joint action, important decisions such as improved access to school, better facilities, improved curriculum, and ongoing teacher training are supposed to follow. The problem with this assumption, is that frequently neither governments nor communities consider the needs of girls and women as high

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priority. Below we review the possible perspectives and efforts of key actors in the educational decision-making process. We also present strategies for action.

4.1 The Government

In principle, because of its wide reach and political mandate, the government should play the key roles in bringing about changes for women. In fact, the <u>FLS</u> document identified the government as the key implementor of the basic strategies. It also recognized that in some cases there would be a need to create "appropriate governmental machinery for monitoring and improvement the status of women" (Paragraph 57).

As we showed above, the track record of governments in responding to the <u>FLS</u> has been overwhelmingly weak. Most of the reports concentrate on access gains, which as noted before are part of a global trend rather than results of specific governmental policies pursued after <u>FLS</u>. The evidence reflects a great deal of reluctance and a slow pace when dealing with gender issues.

Two key questions may be raised about governmental performance:

- what are the reasons for past state performance?

- how can the state be persuaded to engage in more tangible actions to the benefit of women?

The <u>FLS</u> document as well as country reports (CSW, 1990, p. 63) maintains that the causes for the inferior status of women can be found in poverty and underdevelopment, caused in turn by imperialism, colonialism, apartheid, uneven terms of trade, economic adjustment programs, and cultural factors. This analysis sees the problems women face in society as derivative of other problems. It eschews the notion that ideological forces operate through dynamics of their own, independent of the concurrent problems the world faces. It fails to acknowledge that governmental policies and actions often support material conditions and ideological features that maintain the subordinate roles of women.

Reasons for the low performance by the state fall broadly along two lines. A technical explanation is that the implementation of complex innovations needs certain preconditions to be successful. A more political explanation is that governments support a male-dominated social order and, thus, they will be likely to show weak response to attempts to transform gender relations.

Adherents of an analytical perspective that sees the state as non-neutral and interested in the maintenance of the status quo regarding gender in society would not leave the state alone. Rather, <u>they would apply pressure to influence state policies and</u>

<u>would constantly monitor their implementation</u>.

Change strategies would involve the following actors and actions:

The Governmental Machinery:

1.   Training governmental officials in gender issues. This training should reach a large number of staff members and be provided on an ongoing basis. It would comprise the knowledge necessary to understand the nature of gender conditions in society and schools and would include training in the development of qualitative accounts of school practices and environments. The training should be provided by professionals and activists familiar with gender theory, analysis, and project development from universities, NGOs, and grassroots.

2.   Providing government officials with specific tools for gender analysis. This would be training targeted to government officers specifically charged with implementing gender-sensitive programs; it would be training at a much more practical and micro level, such as project and program design and implementation. One is surprised to observe that after so many years, governments are still being urged to develop tools for gender analysis and to require government officials to apply these tools in developing policies and programs (CSW, 1994, p. 5).

3.   Enacting legislation to foster gender equity in the school system. The new legislation would address such issues as providing support for revision of curriculum content and increased teacher training, incentives for enrollment and retention, support for research into gender equity in the classroom, and awards for innovative gender-sensitive school programs. This legislation should be designed and rendered operational in cooperation with academicians working on gender (to gain from the contribution of the social sciences) and with women-oriented NGOs (to gain from the actual experience and problem-solving skills of these groups).

4.   Increasing the allocation of funds earmarked for women to the municipal level. This would be an important mechanism to enable more accuracy and speed in the utilization of funds. <u>The task of fund allocation should be conducted through the Women's Units now existing in most countries</u>. Part of the funds would also go toward making these units more efficient and effective.

The Educational System:

5.   Increasing school access through differential means. In African countries this objective will call for making primary and secondary schools and classrooms closer to home and reducing school fees at the secondary school levels. In South Asian countries it will call for increasing the number of schools and classrooms and for setting up single-sex and flexible schools.[5] In Latin America the strategy will call for the improvement of

teacher training to ensure the retention of students. An important element in the expansion of girls and women's schooling will be the provision of pre-school offerings partly both in order to prepare disadvantaged children for the demands of schooling but also to release women so that they may be more available for education and work.

6.   Providing intensive and ongoing pre- and in-service training of teachers.[6] The training of teachers at the primary school level is particularly important because it is necessary to affect the socialization process early in the development of an individual. For instance, if women are to be successfully encouraged to move into scientific and technological careers, their socialization experience has to be modified since their early years. Teachers should be made aware of gender ideologies, stereotypes, and bias. They should also be trained to recognize sex inequities in the classroom and to correct them.

An important strategy within teacher training should the identification of selected teachers to act as change agents in their own schools. Fullan (1993) defines change agentry as "being self-conscious about the nature of change and the change process" (p. 12).

7.   Mapping the elements of gender-sensitive curricula at the national level, with the understanding there will be adaptations at regional and local levels. A crucial point of departure for the new curriculum should be the revision of sexual stereotypes and bias in textbooks. This new curriculum should not merely show the economic and social contributions women make to their societies; it should also seek to reshape women's identities as human beings in their own right. The gender-sensitive curriculum at primary and secondary levels should be designed to consider such issues as:

parenting and changes in families,
sexuality and sexuality control,
authoritarianism in various institutions (including the
    family and schools),
motherhood as an ideology,
knowledge of women in the economy,
issues of power and gender politics,
violence against women, and
sexism, racism, and other forms of discrimination.

8.   Creating strong partnerships with actors outside the school system, such as women NGOs and academicians. As Fullan (1993) notes, strong partnerships require new structures, new activities, and a rethinking of the internal working of each institution. Schools are organized administratively and culturally in ways that preserve the status quo. Introducing gender-related changes poses a substantial challenge to both bureaucracies and teachers. Moving into reformulation of the curriculum and the revision of textbooks will necessitate the collaboration of feminist groups and university

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women. Partnerships embracing school personnel and key actors in the ongoing efforts to alter gender definitions will provide critical support.

9. Providing technical and vocational programs targeted to women. These programs should enable women to move into nonconventional occupations in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. They should not be merely technical but should also provide program participants with gender awareness; empowerment outcomes should be essential objectives of these training and vocational programs. In the case of occupations in the formal sector of the economy, it has been shown that technical training programs without industrial employment policies favoring women will have limited effect; governments, therefore, must be persuaded to develop such policies.

10. Producing gender-specific information about the population inside and outside the school systems. Official statistics, including those presented by UNESCO, have improved but still provide limited information about repeaters, dropouts, and school-leavers. This information also needs to be broken down by urban/rural residence and ethnicity as national conditions may warrant. Statistics regarding nonformal education programs need to be collected. Since indicators are unidimensional, it is necessary to use multiple indicators and to develop a framework for their use. Additional important indicators are teacher/student ratios, teacher characteristics, and public expenditures on education. The Appendix identifies a set of indicators that considers the education context, school processes, and student outcomes.

Longer-term strategies, those which would shape the composition of the state over time, would include the following actions:

1. Enabling women to enter higher education in larger numbers. While women are present in universities, their numbers in many of the least developed countries is still very small. This impedes the creation of a cadre of women leaders in various fields critical to national development. An area in which women need to have greater representation concerns school management and administration. The small pool of women in universities reduces the possibilities of women running for political office. Women student in universities also need to receive increased training in research methods. This would benefit the educational system because research that gives insight into the experience of schooling is urgently needed.

2. Supporting women's studies programs in universities. This would imply funding new women's studies programs in settings where they do not exist and more fully supporting the existing ones. Women's studies programs should work in such ways that they influence other disciplines in the university. Concerning women in scientific and technological fields in the university, a goal should be to increase the number of women, not simply for

greater representation, but with the hope and expectation that they will work to address the conditions/needs of other women. On the one hand, this implies fostering in the women in nonconventional fields a solid awareness of gender issues; on the other hand, it implies training them to develop technologies that address not only the efficiencies of market production but particularly those of home production (which would save women a great deal of time and energy in domestic tasks).

Women's studies programs should promote the use of clinical professors--women with expertise in gender issues and a great deal of practical experience, even though they may not be in academia.

The development of greater knowledge of women's issues in education (and other areas) would be promoted by training in qualitative research methods. These methods would enable researchers and teachers to detect how curricula deliver messages of gender roles and in what ways students develop resistance to gender bias and how this resistance can be strengthened.

4.2 Non-Governmental Organizations

Since the 1970s there has been a rapid growth of nongovernmental organizations. Although there is great variability in their work, many of them have distinguished themselves in the areas of national and community development for their ability to deal with felt-needs of marginal groups and for addressing issues and problems not commonly covered by governmental agencies.

Despite the fact that their work is infrequently documented, feminist and women's groups are conducting creative and transformative work in the area of gender relations in society. A review of the issues dealt with in their training of women indicates their concern not only for income-generation projects (addressing production) but also for issues of reproduction/sexuality and citizen rights. Courses on legal rights, family planning, sex education, domestic violence, and consciousness-raising appear in the curricula of these groups. In addition, these grassroots organizations engage in innovative program design, are committed to implementation, and have the ability to deal with marginal adult women.

Pertinent strategies regarding grassroots groups would be:

1. Incorporating NGOs to a much higher degree in the design of national programs being conducted under government support. This incorporation should lead to a revision of adult education courses for women, which often concentrate on health education and nutrition but ignore critical issues such as power relations between men and women.

2. Giving more funding--with autonomy--to grassroots groups working on women's issues to expand their service areas and to

strengthen their institutional capacity. This could be done through training both inside the country and abroad.

3. Using the expertise and experience of grassroots groups in the educational system by engaging them in teacher training and curriculum revision. There is a need to spell out the various aspects to be considered in a curriculum sensitive to gender issues. This curriculum should include information about career options, sex education, domestic violence, gender awareness, and empowerment, and would show marriage and motherhood as possible rather than inescapable choices.

4. Fostering greater contact between the grassroots groups and the universities, particularly through the women's studies programs. This would allow a very necessary merging of the experience and knowledge of NGOs and the more systematic knowledge of the social sciences in the universities.

5. Using NGOs to expand the educational supply through alternative forms. The provision of nonformal education for school-age children by NGOs seems to offer much potential, especially in countries where there is still a large number of out-of-school children, notably India, Brazil, and Bangladesh. Efforts should take place to ensure that these NGOs transmit education that is gender sensitive.

6. Decreasing fees for secondary schooling in countries, mainly in Africa, where these are levied. One way to facilitate this may be to use more NGO involvement in the provision of secondary schooling and vocational/technical training.

4.3 International Development Agencies

International agencies usually provide small amounts relative to national educational budgets; however, these funds enable innovations and influence the climate of opinion. As noted earlier, the role of international development agencies in the promotion of women's rights and issues has become paramount today, particularly regarding the implementation of second-level strategies. In the past eight years there have been significant and positive changes in the way these agencies define gender issues, set up administrative procedures to deal with projects to ensure gender balance, and select the type of projects to be funded. While there are substantial differences among international agencies in their commitment to gender issues, many have set up Women in Development departments and are effectively engaging in agency work that is sensitive to gender considerations. The leadership in gender in development shown by such institutions such as UNICEF, SIDA, USAID, and the Dutch agencies promises continued attention to these issues (Stromquist, 1994).

Specific strategies that international agencies could adopt would be the following:

1. Meeting their funding target of development assistance. The 0.7 percent of GNP for international aid by bilateral agencies agreed upon in 1960 remains unrealized: the average aid proportion is currently 0.36 percent. In addition, international agencies need to increase their support for education (this support decreased from 17 to 11 percent between 1979 and 1989 as a proportion of total bilateral aid). The Human Development Report 1992 (UNDP, 1992) indicates that if military expenditures were to be reduced by 3 percent per year, US$1299 billion would be raised in industrial countries and another US$279 billion in developing countries (Sengupta, 1993). It is clear, therefore, that the military must be a clear target in development efforts.

3. Granting increased and expanded funding to feminist and womens' groups would strengthen their legitimacy as well as their performance and scope of action. To this effect, it is recommended that the World Bank open a line of credit for women in development--in the same way support for environmental efforts has been organized--and earmark funds to such effect. Women-run and feminist NGOs have clearly emerged as both conceptual leaders and effective implementors. It is natural to imagine there should be a special link between international organizations (which have the money) and these NGOs (which have the most direct experience, concrete ideas, and the commitment to implement them).

4. Continuing and expanding the practice of imposing requirements of gender responsiveness in the programs and projects conducted with external funds. Given the important role international aid plays at the present time, this leverage could be most effective.

5. Calling upon the community of international donors to provide regular budgets (as opposed to the current voluntary contributions) to UNIFEM and INSTRAW. Both institutions carry out critical tasks, yet their funds are too small and unpredictable for their mission. (In 1993 UNIFEM operated with about US$14 million and INSTRAW with US$2.2 million.) It is hoped that, with increased budgets, these two institutions will devote greater attention to educational issues.

6. Encouraging governments to act in greater collaboration with grassroots groups, particularly feminist and women's groups. This would be particularly essential in teacher training efforts and textbook revisions. The government/NGO/university collaboration should lead to the design of programs for women that are based on multiple strategies and not single-factor interventions.

7. Granting greater allocations to increase the autonomy and effectiveness of Women in Development offices in developing countries. This will increase support of gender-sensitive programs in the countries and encourage the government to engage in them.

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8.   Developing increased knowledge of national and international women-oriented NGOS.   The various international agencies should develop inventories of NGOs with proven performance, which are already servicing local communities via training, publications, meetings, and overall networking. Among these NGOs, the following international bodies can be mentioned: ISIS International (Documentation and Communication Network among Women), REPEM (Popular Education among Women Networks of Latin America), WGNRR (Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights and Women's Health), FEMPRESS (Latin American Network of Feminist Information), and ENTRE MUJERES, a network for international cooperation.   REPEM is currently carrying out a campaign for "human and nonsexist education" in Latin America.   This campaign has been adopted by CEAAL (the Latin American Council for Adult Education), which will integrate it into its networks for ecology, popular economy, and literacy.   More information about these experiences would be useful.

9.   Providing support for the wide range of women's NGOs. If they are strong and mature they should be used as resources; if not, they should be provided with institutional support (training both at home and abroad, equipment, and operational expenses).   These groups, in particular, should be trained to analyze and monitor policy. They should constitute a key group for the implementation of the Platform for Action recommendations by detailing and operationalizing them at local levels.

10.   Increasing funding of UN organizations working on women's issues, such as UNIFEM, ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, and UNDP so that governments in developing countries get the message regarding the importance of gender in development efforts.

11. Seeking a better understanding of the content and objectives of NFE programs so that they contribute to the empowerment of women.   This implies the funding of research activities to examine groups in order to discover whether and how groups that engage in empowerment teaching strategies (i.e., an empowering process) also succeed in empowering the women participants (i.e., an empowering outcome).

4.4 Community

This concept should be taken at two levels: the students' parents/families and the local community in which families live. At the first one would look at internal decisions within the household, at the second the cultural forces and resources that affect schooling. Although the official discourse always considers the "community" as a major resource in achieving relevant and efficient education, in the context of educational changes in favor of women several considerations are in order.

First, financial decisions made by the family have led economists to conclude that families function as institutions that restrict private investment in girls' education to the benefit of sons. As a result, economist Schultz has asserted

that:

> Any public policy initiative designed to achieve a redistribution of family resources will undoubtedly be resisted by those negatively affected. Thus, the effort to encourage the schooling of women unleashes an internal political process within families as well as among those interest groups in society who stand to gain or lose by a reallocation of public goods (Schultz, 1993, p. 242).

When considering investment in women's and girls' education, therefore, it must be recognized that many poor and rural families are antagonistic to women's schooling for reasons of economic survival in addition to those of a cultural nature.

Second, participatory decision-making--through which parents and community members become influential actors in educational policy--is a principle widely endorsed by governments and international agencies. In reality, the participation of parents and community members in education is low and utilized mostly for the physical support of ongoing activities (e.g., building schools and classrooms, raising funds for equipment). The instances in which parents are able to influence decision-making in the school involve parents who are highly educated or professionals who can assert themselves in front of educators.

Third, these groups are more likely than not to be conservative along gender lines. Sex ideologies pervade culture and are enacted in everyday situations at home and community. What communities may consider "relevant education" for girls and boys in many cases is a very differentiated education that considers women as primarily mothers and domestic managers.

There is work to be done in sensitizing community members to gender issues; this should be the focus when thinking of community involvement rather than to expect that these groups can by themselves play an active role in bringing about changes regarding gender in the school.

There have been important social movements, particularly in low-income neighborhoods in Latin America, which have resulted in the expansion of primary and secondary schooling for poor children. On the other hand, it must be noted that these movements--given the immediate nature of their problem--have focused almost exclusively on issues of access, not quality or content.

Nonetheless, some important actions could be carried out by parents and community:

1. Engaging parents and community members to set up non-formal education programs at the primary level. In areas where there are no school facilities, the establishment of programs with flexible hours and close to the home of girls and women

would enable them to participate. Such programs have been successfully implemented in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Reportedly, with parental management, these schools can provide "a good and relevant education at the modest costs of US$16 per annum"--a fraction of the costs to most governments (Chung, 1994, p. 10).

2.   Organizing progressive parents and community members, to the extent that they exist, into committees to review textbooks for sexual stereotypes and bias. This is a task that committees have successfully accomplished in some developed countries.

3.   Promoting more dialogue between women and feminist networks in developed and developing countries to alter public opinion in developed countries in favor of increased support for women in development. Feminist groups in developed countries can play a significant role in influencing their respective bilateral agencies to give more attention to women's issues, particularly education.

4.5 The Mass Media

Unquestionably, the influence of TV, radio, and print media is greatly felt among youths and adults. While some programs and articles evince awareness of problems and issues concerning women, there is a large set of communications and images that feeds upon stereotypes of women as sexual objects, presents women in limited roles as mothers and family managers, and depict women as passive and subordinate beings. The role of music as presented on tapes, CDs, and music channels is increasingly seen as important in affecting the youth culture. The strength and frequency of media messages are of such magnitude that they cannot be left unattended in educational strategies to advance the condition of women.

In a market economy, where profits are constantly sought, it is unlikely that the mass media may be persuaded to abandon strategies that exploit women. But, some inroads may be made through:

1. Promoting the establishment of media policies addressing gender portrayal and violence against women.

2.   Facilitating the integration of media literacy training on gender issues into pre- and in-service teacher training at primary and secondary school levels.

3.   Training women to use media (TV, radio, newspapers) for transmitting information (technical training and social communication training) for the advancement of women, and training them to critique existing media programs. The gender-oriented curriculum in these programs should parallel that identified above in section 4.1.

4.   Fostering ties among grassroots groups, universities,

and TV producers in shaping popular programs, particularly soap operas.

5.   Supporting the production of educational materials by independent organizations.   One example of an effective intervention is the production of educational modules in newspaper form by CIPAF (a feminist NGO in the Dominican Republic) and their subsequent dissemination to 10,000 individuals and groups.   This effort, being funded by SIDA (Sweden), is an example that could easily be replicated in other developing regions.

6.   Encouraging (through scholarships and related incentives) the presence of women in communications programs at the university level.

7.   Encouraging the production of alternative programs by small producers using video or radio; these products should be linked to school systems so that they may be used in classrooms. The production of songs with a social message should also be encouraged via financial rewards to composers and performers.

In some countries, "social marketing" campaigns using the media   are being tried, primarily with external funding (Stromquist, 1994).   This social marketing has sought to persuade fathers to provide more schooling to their daughters. Unfortunately, the argument being used to "sell" girls' education to the fathers is that educated women make them more marriageable and better wives--which ends up supporting the dominant gender ideology.

4.6 The Private Sector

There is some limited but promising evidence of beneficial work using business firms to sponsor and otherwise support programs on gender issues in education.   The most detailed example comes from Guatemala, where the business community participated with the government and local groups in the development of a "national action plan for girls' education" and subsequently funded about 35 girls' education projects.

There is reasonable evidence that the Guatemalan model is producing positive results in terms of schooling retention.   It remains to be seen whether this model could be translated to other settings.   For business, the incentive to support efforts to increase women's education (by providing textbooks, uniforms, general-use scholarships) could be justified in terms of the access the firms would gain to a better trained and thus more productive labor force.   The disincentive would be that a labor force with greater education may drive wages up and make firms less competitive.

Linkages with business firms may be a fruitful strategy for training programs, as firms could be used to ensure that girls and women with training in nontraditional occupations find

appropriate employment.

5.   MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISMS

There is a need to operate with at least the following indicators: enrollment at all three levels of education, completion of level, and repetition and dropout rates.   All national educational systems should collect these types of data annually and present them broken down by sex in both absolute and relative terms.   Data on women's participation in post-secondary vocational and technical programs should also be gathered regularly.

When monitoring performance of educational and training systems, it is customary to rely exclusively on quantitative indicators.   However, these have a very limited nature.   They tend to depict initial points in the system (e.g., enrollment figures) or final points in the system (e.g., completion rates in various programs, percentages of women/women in selected fields). These indicators do not treat educational processes and thus provide no knowledge of how things operate or how results emerge. Even in the case of indicators regarding dropout and repetition rates, no knowledge is gained regarding how these rates are produced within schools.

Indicators have even more limited usefulness when applied to gender issues.   Indicators cannot measure ideological messages and socialization practices in schools.   To describe pervasive as well as subtle changes in areas such as classroom dynamics (particularly teacher-student interaction) and knowledge and attitudes acquired about women and men in society, it will be necessary to engage in qualitative (i.e., ethnographic) studies of educational systems, school settings, and training programs. In these studies, it will be critical to consider the perspective of the various school actors, notably students and teachers.

To protect the implementation of legislation to advance women's conditions, it will be useful to create national-level commissions comprising a wide spectrum of governmental officials, university women, and women from NGOs. These commissions should not only supervise the work being conducted along gender lines but should have the authority to make recommendations to be followed.   They should also have the authority to mandate research in areas that need further understanding.   Moreover, these commissions should supervise the allocation of external funds to women's projects and programs.   It is well known that money is inherently fungible and that governments tend to reduce their support to education by an amount proportional to the aid received.   Part of the monitoring task should be looking for mechanisms for sustainability, areas in which others may present resistance, and ways in which different supporting actors can coordinate efforts.   These commissions should also conduct small surveys on an annual basis to gain information on the levels of girls and boys attitudes toward math and sciences and their

occupational and career aspirations.

As seen from examining the FLS, there has not been a lack of ideas of what to do to advance the conditions of women. What has been missing instead is implementation of these recommendations. This paper has argued that governments, because they represent dominant interests and ideologies, will be reluctant to work on gender issues. This being the case, there is a fundamental need for the joint action of international development agencies and women-oriented NGOs. This action does not necessarily mean bypassing the state but expanding the range of interlocutors with which international development agencies interact.

CONCLUSIONS

Although a number of effective measures were identified by FLS, governments so far have shown a willingness to act primarily on the simplest level of educational interventions regarding women: opening school access and reducing distance and time constraints to school participation. They have indicated some willingness to act on the second level of interventions--those seeking to enable women to attain equal levels of schooling and greater participation in nonconventional fields. Most governments have a reluctance to act on the third level of interventions--those modifying current social relations of gender. Education for new relations between men and women and society is yet to be offered in the public school system; there are indications that this type of education is emerging in nonformal education programs outside the school system.

Relying on lessons from previous attempts to introduce gender-related innovations into educational settings, it would seem highly advisable not only to propose gender-sensitive measures but to delineate the possible objectives, content, and methods of this education. Since teachers would play a major role in the desired changes in program content and classroom dynamics, they must be involved in the change process. This calls for a decentralized, perhaps even school-level approach to change. To foster adoption of innovative ways of dealing with gender in education, there should be descriptions of program and course content that are detailed enough to be understood. To facilitate this understanding, consultants could be hired to translate objectives and proposed areas of action into specific sets of processes and activities.

The nature of women's conditions in society calls for a comprehensive approach to education, to respond to the different sources and types of messages for women and to reach both the young and the adult at the same time. This presupposes the constant need to affect community groups and media in addition to parents of school children. This report has attempted to identify strategies involving the six most crucial actors in the educational arena. It is clear that the kind of education that is needed for women's advancement and redefinition will not

naturally emerge but will have to be the product of strong alliances: women in NGOs and social movements, in universities, in private research institutions, in government, and in international development agencies. As warranted, the participation of community members, the media, and the private sectors should be engaged.

Women-oriented NGOs and academics in women's studies programs could and should play a role in the training of teachers as well as in the modification of both curriculum and media messages and representations. The joint work of these groups could be strengthened if sources of funding exist. International development agencies--the most likely providers of financial resources at the present time--are essential in the gender-oriented change process in education. Without external assistance, it can be predicted that most governments will not take visible steps to advance women's education.

Bilateral and multilateral donor agencies remain a major source of funding and leverage for changes in the education of women. Through public appeals, notably the forthcoming Platform for Action, they should be asked to increase the proportion of funds allotted to women in development, specifically to their education and training. This would enable the agencies to fund their projects more completely and to cover a larger number of countries. For those who may fear the ethical implications of international agency work in the cultural domain of developing countries, it should be stated that women's rights are a manifestation of human rights, those owed to the individual regardless of national affiliation. This means that the defense of these rights goes beyond the nation-state claims for total sovereignty.

Work on women's education and other areas of social and economic life needs to be defended on the basis of social justice and human rights. Although research has demonstrated the economic contribution of women to production and the benefits to be gained from making this contribution more efficient, the economic rationale--independent of the human rights premise--is likely to bring upon women additional burdens without transforming their subordinate roles at home and community. Moreover, a focus on economic efficiency may end up solidifying the current sexual division of labor and supporting the assumed "comparative advantage" of men and women.

It should be evident that while the existence of a political will is necessary to commit attention and resources to an education that advances women's interests, it is equally necessary that this political will be developed through the steady incorporation of women in the political arena. As indicated above, this implies a greater presence of women at the university level, a terrain for leadership development.

Women have been making gains in access to formal education. This growth should not be underrated; but it would be erroneous

to appraise women's educational advancement merely in terms of initial enrollment. Questions of cycle completion must be considered and matters concerning what is learned and how educational and training settings are experienced remain crucial in the quest for the transformation of gender relations.

NOTES

[1] In a handful of countries primary school enrollment rates of girls are slightly higher than those of men (about 1 to 5 percent higher). This occurs in countries where boys work in cattle herding tasks (e.g., Botswana and Lesotho) or in war-afflicted nations (e.g., Nicaragua). In Lesotho and Botswana the relatively larger high school enrollment of girls can be accounted for by the absence of boys of similar ages who have let to work in South Africa. In several Latin American countries slightly more women than men are enrolled in high school, perhaps a reflection of men's earlier incorporation into the formal and informal sector of the economy in urban areas.

[2] The most complete set of educational statistics (UNESCO Statistical Yearbook) present limited student data by gender. These include gross enrollment rates by level of education, percentage enrollment by grade in primary and secondary education, and percentage repeaters by grade in primary and secondary education. Data about cycle completion and dropping out are not available in its cross-national Yearbook.

[3] This is an ambiguous term as it can refer to conventional knowledge limited to contraception use or wider knowledge such as women's rights to control their own bodies.

[4] This failure may have been further accentuated by the fact that the guidelines for preparation of national plans (elaborated by the Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women) identifies as areas of concern equality of access, completion, and representation in various professional fields. Thus, there is a specific request for each of the following indicators: vocational training enrollment broken down by sex (p.10), illiteracy, enrollment at all three levels, completion at secondary and tertiary levels, graduation from technical fields (engineering degree or diploma), and teachers at all three levels by sex (UN, n.d., pp. 11-12).

[5] The provision of single-sex schools in countries that severely restrict women's physical freedom is recommended as a temporary measure to facilitate girls' access to schooling.

[6] It is noted that the training of teacher in gender issues and the removal of sexual stereotypes in textbooks and the media were recommended earlier by the Commission on the Status of Womn after the first review and appraisal of FLS in 1990.

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APPENDIX

SELECTED INDICATORS TO BE PRESENTED BY GENDER

Education Context:
    Preschool enrollment
    Poverty levels by region
    Minority language status
    Teen pregnancy

School Processes and Services:
    Secondary course taking in science and math, grades 7-12
    Teacher supply and qualifications by teacher gender
    Teacher characteristics by teacher gender
    Student perceptions of classrooms and student-teacher
       interactions

Student Outcomes:
    Dropout by gender
    Student repetition by grade
    Student completion, grades 5, 8, and 12
    College entrance examination scores by gender
    University graduation by field

Adapted from AAUW, 1992, pp. 99-100.

THE GENDER IMPACT OF A MASS LITERACY CAMPAIGN - THE EXAMPLE OF A LITERACY PROGRAM IN INDIA

prepared by*

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*   The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

Gender Impact of a Mass Literacy Program in India

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INTRODUCTION

Mass literacy and education have engaged the attention of countries and governments since the early 16th century. Mass literacy emerged as a societal concern in Europe with the rise of Protestantism. Initially the impetus to mass literacy might have come from the need of a new religious ideology. However, factors such as the invention of the printing press, the continuous improvements in science and technology, especially in the areas of transport and communications and the attendant emergence of modern nation-states strengthened the efforts towards mass literacy.

There have been a number of successful mass literacy campaigns (MLCs) all over the world. They have taken place under a variety of political and historical conditions ranging from that prevailing in Sweden in the mid sixteenth century to Nicaragua in the 1980s. Practically every one of these campaigns has, however, formed part of an ongoing, larger structural or socioeconomic transformation. For example, the literacy campaigns in the former Soviet Union, the Peoples Republic of China, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and Cuba came immediately in the wake of a socialist revolution. In the case of Tanzania, the campaign took place immediately after independence. In the early modern European societies there was a drive for greater literacy when these societies made their transition to capitalism.

OBJECTIVES OF LITERACY CAMPAIGNS

The goals of literacy campaigns have been changing significantly through the course of history. The early European Protestant Reformers had religious reasons for introducing literacy for the masses. In the twentieth century the vision of literacy became much broader, especially if the campaigns were part of or sequel to socialist revolutions or national liberation movements. These campaigns conceived of literacy as a process of empowerment and recognized the political significance of literacy.

More recently, as many newly independent countries in the post Second World War period embarked on nation building efforts, narrow interpretations of literacy were put forward. The World Conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of Illiteracy held in Teheran in 1965 put the accent on so-called functional literacy, which views literacy primarily as an instrument that enhances productivity. While this concept continues to have its adherents a decade later a broader conception of literacy had reemerged.

The international symposium for literacy held at Persepolis, Iran in 1975 took the view that literacy is to be seen as an instrument for human liberation.

> "...literacy creates the conditions for the acquisition of the critical consciousness
> of the contradictions of the society in which man (*and woman*) lives and of its

aims; it also stimulates initiative and his (*or her*) participation in the creation of projects capable of acting upon the world, of transforming it, and of defining the aims and objectives of an authentic human development.[1]

Literacy, especially for women, must be viewed in its broad perspective and should be seen as a process of empowerment. Literacy for women should not be viewed merely as a means to achieve development ends, however laudable. Literate women may contribute to lower fertility rates or better primary school retention, but literacy for women should be viewed more as a means to liberate and empower them.

ADULT LITERACY VERSUS PRIMARY EDUCATION

Historical experience strongly suggests that elimination of illiteracy through a process of diffusion, that is, by universalization of elementary education or through selective approaches would take far too long. Mass literacy campaigns (MLCs) constitute the most effective strategy for elimination of widespread illiteracy within a reasonable time frame. In a careful study of mass literacy campaign experiences of the twentieth century, Bhola (1984) has documented the effectiveness of the campaign approach.[2] The Soviet Literacy Campaign that commenced in 1919 achieved remarkable results. From a low level of 44 percent in the age group 9-49 in 1919, the literacy rate climbed to 87.4 percent by 1939. Female literacy rate jumped from 32.2 percent in 1919 to 81.6 percent in 1939. With universal, compulsory and free schooling, practically the entire population in the age group of 9-49 had become literate by 1980 and male-female literacy differences had been wiped out.

The Chinese Campaign that took place between 1950 and 1980 was a mix of adult literacy programs and a widely accessible school system. Literacy rates among young and middle aged peasants rose from around 20 percent in 1949 to 70 percent in 1981. In the same period, literacy rates for workers and employees rose from around 30 to 40 percent to 92 percent. Bhola[3] further reports that 100 million non-literates between the ages of 14 and 45 were made literate between 1949 and 1966 and another 37 million thereafter presumably by the early 1980s. Special emphasis was laid on female education.

Whether it was USSR, China or Vietnam or the less populous countries such as Cuba or Tanzania, mass campaigns have proved successful. While the elimination of illiteracy has also required universal free and compulsory schooling, a mass campaign has been a very essential part of every successful effort to eliminate illiteracy. Neither mere expansion of schooling nor adult education programs aimed at small and apparently manageable target population seems sufficient for eliminating illiteracy. Historical experience suggests that a mass campaign to be successful should involve the majority of adult non-literates, especially the women, and embrace the entire population in a national effort. This is particularly true for countries like India with very large non-literate populations, with the majority being female.

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[1] L. Bataille (ed) 1976, A Turning point for Literacy; Proceedings of the International Symposium for Literacy, Persepolis, Iran 1975, Published by Pergamon Press, Oxford. Words in italics mine.

[2] H. S. Bhola (1984), Campaigning for Literacy, UNESCO:Paris.

[3] Ibid.

While political ideologies as well as conceptions of literacy have differed from one literacy campaign to another, strong commitment to the eradication of illiteracy on the part of political leadership of the country has been indispensable to the success of every campaign.

THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE

The Indian experience with regard to mass campaigns for literacy—which is of course far from complete and is still evolving—is in many respects quite distinctive. Every successful literacy campaign the world over was either accompanied by significant structural transformations in economy, polity and society, or had occurred as an immediate sequel to a successful socialist or national liberation revolution. The mass literacy campaigns in India are, however, not taking place as part of a larger, dynamic socioeconomic transformation or on the basis of a pre-existing atmosphere of revolutionary élan in society. On the contrary, they are occurring in the midst of widely prevalent cynicism and significant measure of disillusionment among wide sections of the people concerning the post-independence developments in the country in all spheres.

LITERACY STATUS

India's literacy status in absolute terms and in relation to comparable countries is quite low. Table 1 provides data on literacy rates for 14 developing countries with populations above 50 million. Except for Turkey, which is a European outlier in the sample, the countries account for practically all the 'large' developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The data demonstrates how poorly India fares with regard to female literacy. Only Pakistan and Bangladesh fare worse, while Egypt fares as poorly as India. China which was behind India in 1950, is now way ahead.

Table 1

Adult Literacy Rates, Select Intercountry Comparisons.

Country	Adult Literacy (%) 1990	
	Total	Female
Bangladesh	35	22
Brazil	81	80
China	73	62
Egypt	48	34
India	48	34
Indonesia	77	68
Iran	54	43
Mexico	87	85
Nigeria	51	39
Pakistan	35	21
Philippines	90	89
Thailand	93	90
Turkey	81	71
Vietnam	88	84

Source: World Development Report, 1992.

Table 2

All India Literacy Rates (%) by Sex, Population aged 7 years and above, 1951 to 1991

Year	Total	Male	Female
1951	19.74	29.00	2.82
1961	30.11	42.96	16.32
1971	36.49	48.92	23.00
1981[*]	43.56	56.37	29.75
1991[**]	52.11	63.86	39.42

[*]Excludes Assam.
[**]Excludes Jammu and Kashmir.

Source: Prem Chand, Literacy Digest, Directorate of Adult Education, Government of India, New Delhi, 1991.

According to the 1991 Census of India only 52.11 percent of the population aged seven years and above was literate (refer Table 2). The situation is much worse if one were to consider the female or the rural literacy rates. The female literacy rate was only 39.42 percent. While there has been considerable increase in female literacy since India attained independence in 1947, it is far below the male literacy rate of 63.86 percent.

There are also considerable inter-regional variations within the country with states like Bihar and Rajasthan having female literacy rates of 22.9 percent and 20.4 (refer Table 3). Out of a total of 452 districts, 180 have rural female literacy rates that are below 30 percent.

Even in absolute terms the number of non-literates in India poses a challenge. The total number of non-literates in the 7+ population, (excluding the state of Jammu and Kashmir, where the Census was not held) in 1991, was a staggering 332.29 millions of whom 202.14 millions were females.

If one were to concentrate on the 9-45 age group, a rough estimate yields a figure of 200 million non-literates. Here one has to take into account the fact that this 200 million is not a static figure. Every year primary school dropouts are being added to the pool of non-literates. For India as a whole in 1986, the percentage of enrollment in class V compared to that in class I is 49.28 percent, indicating a high dropout rate[4]. The dropout rate for females is of course much higher. All of this suggests that a considerable number of non-literates, both as non-enrolled and as dropout children are being added to the already massive pool of non-literates.

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[4] Source: Fifth All India Educational Survey, National Council Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 1989.

Table 3

Inter State Literacy Rate Comparison in India, 1991

State	Literacy Rate (%)		
	Total	Male	Female
Andhra Pradesh	44.1	55.1	32.7
Assam	52.9	61.9	43.0
Bihar	38.5	52.5	22.9
Gujarat	61.3	73.1	48.6
Haryana	55.9	69.1	40.5
Karnataka	56.0	67.3	44.3
Kerala	89.8	93.6	86.2
Madhya Pradesh	44.2	58.4	28.9
Maharashtra	64.9	76.6	52.3
Orissa	49.1	63.1	34.7
Punjab	58.5	65.7	50.4
Rajasthan	38.6	55.0	20.4
Tamil Nadu	62.7	73.8	51.3
Uttar Pradesh	41.6	55.7	25.3
West Bengal	57.7	67.8	46.6

Source: Statistical Database For Literacy,
National Institute of Adult Education,
New Delhi, 1993.

It has been estimated that if past trends continue and no significant acceleration occurs in the rate of expansion of literacy, India could well end up with the dubious distinction of being home to more than half of the world's non-literates by 2000 AD. If this is to be averted, it is critical to launch a massive national effort aimed simultaneously at eradication of illiteracy and universalization of primary education.

The MLCs in India arose out of this need to tackle the growing problem of illiteracy. In 1989 the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP)[5] of Ernakulam district launched its Total Literacy Campaign. This effort was the result of the coming together of two distinct forces, the People's Science Movement, namely the KSSP and a set of committed bureaucrats in the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India. Of course, the latter could not have

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[5] A non governmental organisation whcih has been a pioneer of People's Science Movements in Kerala, KSSP played a lead role in the MLC of Ernakulam district of Kerala.

acted without the tacit political support of the elected government. However, the initiative taken by this concerned group of top civil servants was exemplary and critical to the launching of the Ernakulam experiment, which ultimately triggered the chain reaction of mass literacy campaigns. Subsequently, the National Literacy Mission Authority[6] (NLMA) of the Government of India has provided sustained leadership to the literacy movement in the country. The Ernakulam and subsequent campaigns have spawned a new Mass Literacy Campaign model. This is India's unique and distinctive contribution to the global pool of experience with mass campaigns for literacy.

According to an official source, 183 districts in India (out of 452 districts) had ongoing literacy and post-literacy campaigns as of January 1993.[7] By September 1993, the figure had crossed 200. The total target coverage amounted to roughly 50 million people[8] , of whom around two thirds are women. In most districts, the non-literates covered are in the 15-45 age group, although there have been several variations. These campaigns have been taking place under varied conditions, ranging from the high literacy districts of the state of Kerala to the most backward and abysmally poor and non-literate districts of Madhya Pradesh or Bihar (refer Table 3).

CHARACTERISTICS OF MLCs

To understand the rapid spread of the mass literacy campaigns since 1989 one has to understand how the MLC model differs from the earlier adult education programs implemented in India. Most earlier adult education programs were center based programs relying on lowly paid staff to conduct classes for reluctant learners. There was no attempt to involve the community or to excite the learners or instructors into joining the campaign. No special attempts were made to specifically target the women learners or to make it easier for them either physically or socially to enroll in the centers.

Three critical characteristics distinguish the MLC model from the earlier center based adult education programs implemented by the government.

1. The MLC model is based on a mass campaign approach. Typically the MLC has as its territory a compact geographical administrative area. This is usually a district. It has a clearly specified target population of non-literates, usually all non-literates in the chosen area in a specified age group. It is also time bound, the period of the entire campaign being between 12 and 18 months. Every major activity is carried out as a mass event to get large numbers of people excited about the program and to create a 'literacy-friendly' environment.

2. The MLC is based on a participatory approach, in which people at all levels are encouraged to participate actively in the campaign by joining the literacy committees at the district, block or village levels.

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[6] The National Literacy Mission Authority is an autonomous body in the Department of Education of the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development.

[7] The Union Budget 1993-94, Government of India, February 1993.

[8] Ibid.

3. The MLC is based fundamentally and critically on voluntarism. The entire work of imparting literacy to learners is done on a voluntary basis. All work except that of the full-time project staff is wholly voluntary.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF MLCs

The MLC in a district typically operates with a three-legged structure: the entire governmental machinery, the full-time project staff including a core group of committed activists and popular literacy committees at various levels. The campaign consists of three distinct phases, the motivation-mobilization phase, the teaching-learning phase, and the consolidation-evaluation phase.

FOUR COMPONENTS OF MLCs

The National Literacy Mission of the Government of India has prescribed four components of literacy, namely, reading and writing, numeracy, functionality and social awareness. Detailed guidelines regarding the competency levels to be achieved in reading, writing and numeracy skills were also prescribed by the NLMA. Evaluation of learners was done based on the prescribed competency levels.

THE ERNAKULAM CAMPAIGN—WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

The Total Literacy Campaign[9] was first inaugurated in January, 1989 in Ernakulam district of Kerala State. The Total Literacy Campaign experience was emulated in the other districts of Kerala between 1989 and 1991. Over 1.25 million persons acquired basic literacy skills during the campaign period and Kerala's literacy rate jumped approximately 6 to 7 percentage points[10]. The literacy rate in Kerala as per the 1991 Census was about 90 percent with the male and female literacy rates being 94 and 86 percent respectively.

While the achievements in Kerala were remarkable, it had had high literacy rates even at the start of the campaign and a history of mass movements. The challenge was to determine if the model worked even in the more rural and backward areas of India and also to see if women from socially backward areas could be persuaded to participate in the campaign. Pudukkottai in Tamil Nadu state was one such backward district which initially took up the challenge of seeing if a volunteer driven Mass Literacy Campaign was feasible even in an economically and socially backward district.

THE MLC IN PUDUKKOTTAI—REPLICATION AND INNOVATION

Pudukkottai is a small economically and socially backward rural district, with a population of 1.32 million, in Tamil Nadu state of Southern India. As per the 1991 Census, the literacy rate of the district was 58.4, the male literacy rate being 72.8 percent and the female literacy rate 44.2 percent. The district had the highest male-female differential in literacy rates in the state of Tamil Nadu. More than 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. The people of

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[9] The Total Literacy Campaign was later renamed the Mass Literacy Campaign.

[10] Athreya, Venkatesh, The Kerala Model—Now to Extend the Literacy Drive, *Frontline*, May 25-June 7, 1991, Madras.

the district are primarily engaged in dryland agriculture and the district is frequently subject to droughts.

Pudukkottai district consists of 13 blocks and 2 municipalities[11] each roughly with a population of 80,000 to 100,000. For the purposes of the campaign, the block was subdivided into 53 sub-blocks based on the learner population. Each sub-block consisted of about 3000 learners.

In Pudukkottai, the MLC was formally launched on 23 July 1991. However, efforts to identify committed full-time personnel had been going on for around six months by the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti[12] (a non-governmental organization) and the district administration. The author of this paper was the administrative and development head of the district and was also the Chairperson of the District Literacy Society which launched the MLC in Pudukkottai.

CAMPAIGN FUNDING

Funding for the Pudukkottai campaign came from the federal and state governments. The total project cost was Rs. 18.9 million ($ 0.6 million). The per learner cost was Rs. 65.20 ($ 1.90). The District Literacy Society was encouraged to mobilize local resources if necessary. The campaign was cost effective because the teaching was entirely done by volunteers and there were no supervisory costs. The bulk of the expenditure was incurred on training the volunteers and on mobilization.

THREE PHASES OF THE CAMPAIGN IN PUDUKKOTTAI

The campaign itself was divided into three phases namely the motivation-mobilization phase, the teaching-learning phase, and the consolidation-evaluation phase. While the main characteristics of the campaign in Kerala were adopted in Pudukkottai, special efforts were taken to ensure the participation and empowerment of women in the Pudukkottai campaign.

MOTIVATION-MOBILIZATION PHASE

The motivation-mobilization phase was a period of hectic activity and lasted for about ten weeks. During this period the volunteers and learners were mobilized, volunteers were trained, learners were surveyed and full-time staff put in place.

Environment Building Activities

During the motivation mobilization phase a 'literacy-friendly' environment was created, through print and audio visual media. In particular, powerful street plays called *kalajathas* were enacted which highlight the need for literacy, exhort the educated to come forward as volunteers to help organize and teach and motivate prospective learners to join literacy centers. The *kalajatha* is a powerful motivating tool and uses the street theater or similar folk art form to take the message of literacy to the people. It was used to maximum advantage in Pudukkottai where around 200 local volunteers, both male and female, were trained for two weeks in the district training camps. Sixteen drama troupes then went out to the villages acting out simple but powerful plays highlighting the need for literacy and motivating prospective

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[11] The block is a rural administrative unit and the municipality an urban administrative unit.

[12] A non-governmental organisation actively involved in the campaign in Pudukkottai district and the counterpart of the KSSP.

volunteers and learners to join the campaign. Women were actively involved in these plays as choreographers and actors giving a women's perspective to issues. The audience, often consisting of hundreds of women, were better able to empathize when familiar problems, such as poverty, low wages, illiteracy, women's unequal social status and domestic violence were enacted by women.

Social interaction outside the context of the family between males and females is frowned upon in India, especially, in the backward rural areas. However, personal appeal by teachers and other respected members of the community, helped in getting women to participate in the *kalajatha*s. As the campaign gained momentum, the women seized the initiative and formed an all women troupe. This troupe toured the entire district, created a groundswell of awareness among the women and gave the initial impetus for the participation of women in the campaign. A year and half after the launch of the literacy campaign, Pudukkottai could generate twelve predominantly female troupes which specifically addressed women's issues as part of a campaign of equality for women called *Samata*[13]. Pudukkottai was even able to send women trainers to other districts when they launched their campaigns. This was possible because the involvement of women was made a priority right from the beginning of the campaign.

During the motivation-mobilization phase, besides these activities, convention and rallies were organized from the district to the village level. Rallies of teachers, education and development staff, youth, students and women were also organized. Women were actively encouraged to participate in each of these rallies. In addition, a district level women's rally was held in Pudukkottai town, the headquarters of the district, in which around 10,000 women participated and which set the mood and tone for the involvement of women in the campaign.

The government machinery helped in the initial mobilization efforts, before the momentum of the campaign threw up the local leaders and organizers. Women were encouraged to involve themselves in the actual organizing of the campaign rather than merely participate as instructors. This strategy paid off. The first few women who joined the campaign brought in other women who were interested but had been hesitant to join in.

Door-To-Door Survey

The door-to-door survey was carried out on a single designated day (except for residual mop up shortly thereafter) to get a clear picture of the quantity and geographical distribution of the target population. It also served as a powerful "meet-the learners, find-the volunteers" motivational campaign. 3083 hamlets spread over 745 villages were covered in the survey. The volunteers were mainly students and teachers, many of whom were women. By the end of the survey every household in Pudukkottai had been personally met by a volunteer and the literacy status of the individuals determined. It was the start of a powerful personal appeal that continued throughout the campaign in various ways. The survey revealed that there were 292,000 non-literates in the 9-45 age group. 90,000 of them were males and 202,000 females. Women formed about 69 percent of the non-literate population (refer Table 6).

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[13] Explained later in the text.

Organizational Structure

It was also during this phase that the three-legged organizational structure, complete with full-time personnel, government staff and community representatives was put in place from the district to the village. The administrative head of the district, the District Magistrate is also the Chairperson of the District literacy Society (DLS), which implements the campaign. The members of the DLS consisted of government officials, full-time project staff, the people's representatives, representatives of non-governmental organizations and other institutions. A smaller Executive Committee managed the day-to-day implementation of the program.

Table 4

Full-time Personnel of MLC

Category	Male	Female	Total
District Central Coordinators	7	1	8
Block Coordinators	15	0	15
Block Youth Coordinators	15	15	30
Sub Block Coordinators	94	25	119
All	131	41	172

Source: Arivoli Iyakkam[14] in Pudukkottai District: A Status Study by Economist Group, Madras, 1993.

Full-time project staff managed the day-to-day functioning of the campaign. In Pudukkottai a small group of 172 full-time workers were taken on deputation from government, quasi-government, and educational institutions or recruited temporarily to work in various capacities for the campaign. The non-governmental organization (NGO) which helped to locate committed full-time project staff for the district was the Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS). The Tamil Nadu State Coordinator of BGVS, a professor of Economics, came on deputation to work with the literacy campaign in the state and assist the National Literacy Mission Authority. His commitment to the project and ability to identify sincere full-time project staff with a proven record of community work were crucial to the success of the campaign. The full-time project staff chosen had a record of committed voluntary service and were sensitive to gender issues in particular.

The district level full-time project staff numbering five (later increased to eight) were in place at the start of the campaign. Only one of the district level staff was female and even she was identified with great difficulty. For the block and municipal coordinators an all male contingent had been identified initially by the BGVS. Lack of time and initial reluctance of women to take

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[14] *Arivoli Iyakkam* was the local name of the Pudukkottai Mass Literacy Campaign. It means a movement for knowledge.

on organizing responsibilities forced the DLS to compromise on the composition of the block coordinators.

However, the sub-block coordinators had not been identified at the start of the campaign and there was much discussion and debate as to whether it was possible or even advisable to recruit women for the post, as they would have to visit around 30-40 literacy centers spread over three to five villages, mainly at night. A conscious decision was taken that the DLS would aggressively recruit women to the post and that they would be given the necessary support and help to participate in the campaign. Out of 119 sub-block coordinators 23 sub-block coordinators were women(refer Table 4). While it was initially difficult to get women for the full-time positions it became easier as the campaign proceeded. When the block level youth coordinators had to be recruited, two to three months after the start of the campaign, it was possible to recruit an equal number of male and female block youth coordinators to the organizational posts.

These women dealt with their problems, such as late night travel, a little differently from their male colleagues. Most of the male full-timers invariably returned home after their work was done at night. The female block coordinators invariably stayed overnight in the village in the residences of colleagues or other government officials and traveled back to their homes only the next morning. All the full-timers especially the women were encouraged to learn to ride motorized two-wheelers (a kind of motor-cycle) so that traveling to the villages became easier. Bank loans on easy terms were arranged for these workers so that they had the necessary mobility to frequently visit the villages and the literacy centers.

As the campaign picked up and the women became confident of riding their motorcycles, the more daring and intrepid of them even returned to their homes late at night after visiting the learning centers. These women overcame parental and familial pressure by acting in a group with all of them giving each other the needed support. Most of their male colleagues also gave them support as a result of sensitization to gender issues. The large presence of women not only as instructors but also in the training and organizational structure of the campaign gave it a definite female bias which helped mobilize women in large numbers.

Women who at first seemed invisible, slowly came into their own as the program progressed. They took on organizational roles in real earnest surprising their male colleagues. The process of identifying the women leaders occurred as the campaign progressed. Many who had joined the program hesitantly took courage from other women they saw working in the field, not only as volunteers teaching 10 people, but as managers and organizers of the campaign. These women who initially came forward tentatively, and not sure of their contribution grew in self-confidence and became ready to take on further responsibilities.

Their skills were further strengthened through residential leadership training camps organized to bring about a feeling of solidarity and common purpose and belief in themselves as change agents. Most of the women who attended these camps were doing so for the first time. They had taken the momentous decision of leaving their families behind, while they debated and discussed issues not immediately connected with their families. These women addressed the issues not only of women's practical gender needs such as food, fuel, water and child care, but also of strategic gender needs, such as their own empowerment. Most of the participants went back to their villages determined to do their best to mobilize women in the cause of literacy and beyond. The presence of women in the actual administration of the program was one of the

reasons why the program was so successful in Pudukkottai. This small core group of women, along with their male counterparts, mobilized women by the thousands and made the campaign a women's movement.

Training

Training was yet another important activity that took place during this period. Instructors were taught organizational and teaching skills. All the trainers and trainees were volunteers. Thorough instruction was given on adult pedagogy, and on teaching the literacy primers which had three levels. The primers were designed on the basis of the competency levels specified by the NLMA.

Training was imparted to about 25,000 Volunteer Instructors through a pyramidal structure involving Key Resource Persons, Resource Persons and Master Trainers (refer Table 5). The inclusion of 8 percent women as Resource Persons was a significant achievement and led to the identification of many female Master Trainers. 36 percent of the Master Trainers were women.

Table 5

Trainers and Instructors

Category	Male	Female	All
Key Resource Persons	13	2	15
Resource Persons	143	12	155
Master Trainers	1292	725	2017
Volunteer Instructors	12011	13103	25114

In the MLC, as it was implemented in Pudukkottai, the Master Trainers were critical to the success of the campaign. The Master Trainers were so identified that almost all villages had at least one Master Trainer resident in the village. In addition to training the volunteers, the Master Trainers continually interacted with the Volunteer Instructors and learners. The Master Trainer served a dual role both as a trainer (and thus a member of the local academic committee of the campaign) and a local organizer. By ensuring that more than one third of the Master Trainers were women, there was a visible participation of women in the organizing of the local community. This made it easier for the women learners to attend the learning centers.

TEACHING-LEARNING PHASE

The initial motivation-mobilization phase was followed by six to eight months of literacy classes constituting the teaching-learning phase. If in the first phase, the accent was on high profile events, the focus in the teaching learning phase was on the tens of thousands of literacy centers located in every nook and corner of the district. The availability of a center practically at the doorstep of the learner was one of the main reasons for the high enrollment and attendance of women in the learning centers.

Approximately ten learners attended a literacy center. This size was ideal as it was large enough to provide for sufficient interaction, excitement and collective learning possibilities and small enough to enable the instructor to pay attention to each learner individually. This class

size was also not intimidating to the women learners (many of who were attending learning centers for the first time) and it helped each one of them to progress at their own pace.

The fact that the timing of the centers was decided by the learners and the volunteer instructor depending on their convenience further made it feasible for the women to attend the centers. Every woman who enrolled herself inspired a hundred more. There was a feeling of solidarity that they were not only contributing towards their own empowerment but also in making the district highly literate. Attending the centers became a socially sanctioned activity, which had the support of the district administration and the village committees, at the same time.

The teaching-learning phase is the heart of the MLC, the phase in which the degree of success of the campaign is decisively determined. The emphasis, in this phase, was primarily on the teaching learning process. On the average, each learner is expected to be in a position to acquire the specified levels of competency with respect to reading, writing and arithmetic, over a period of six to nine months involving 200 to 240 hours of instruction using the three graded primers. Close attention has also to be paid to the physical facilities at the learning centers and other infrastructural facilities. Community support for the campaign has to be strengthened by consolidating and making effective people's literacy committees.

Within the teaching-learning phase itself, there was a gradual change in priorities. To begin with, the accent was mainly on maximizing enrollment, taking advantage of the massive motivation and mobilization initiatives of the first phase and the resultant high initial enthusiasm of instructors as well as potential learners.

During the teaching-learning phase of around 11 months, the total number of learners who enrolled in the learning centers was around 246,000. Of them 180,000 were female and 66,000 male. Of the total learners enrolled, 200,000 enrolled themselves within the first two months of the teaching-learning phase (refer Figure 1). It was gratifying to note that 89 percent of the non-literate females in the target age group enrolled in the literacy centers as against 73 percent of the males.

Attendance in the centers fluctuated during the campaign (refer Figure 2). A number of factors contributed to this. Since most of the centers were held outdoors, the chilly weather in December-January contributed to the drop in attendance. Drought conditions from February to April resulted in migration of labor to neighboring districts. School examinations and inadequate training resulted in volunteer dropout. Attendance increased when the weather improved and the laborers returned from the neighboring districts. Volunteers were retrained wherever possible, and class attendance picked up again.
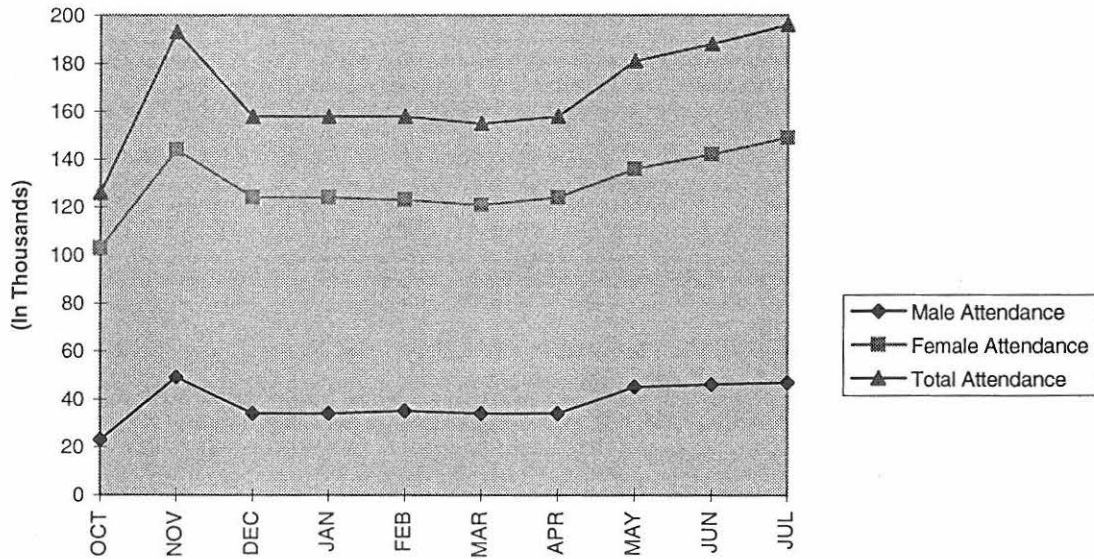
83 percent of the women enrolled attended the centers as against 71 percent of the men. This was in spite of the fact, that women had to attend the literacy centers after a hard day's work in the fields and at their homes. Getting learners back into classes was an ongoing effort during the teaching-learning phase. Motivational efforts continued throughout the campaign with local support. Once a certain percentage of learners were successfully retained and ground level support structures consolidated, the focus shifted to ensuring achievement of desired learning outcomes.

Figure 1
Enrollment of Learners in the Pudukkottai MLC
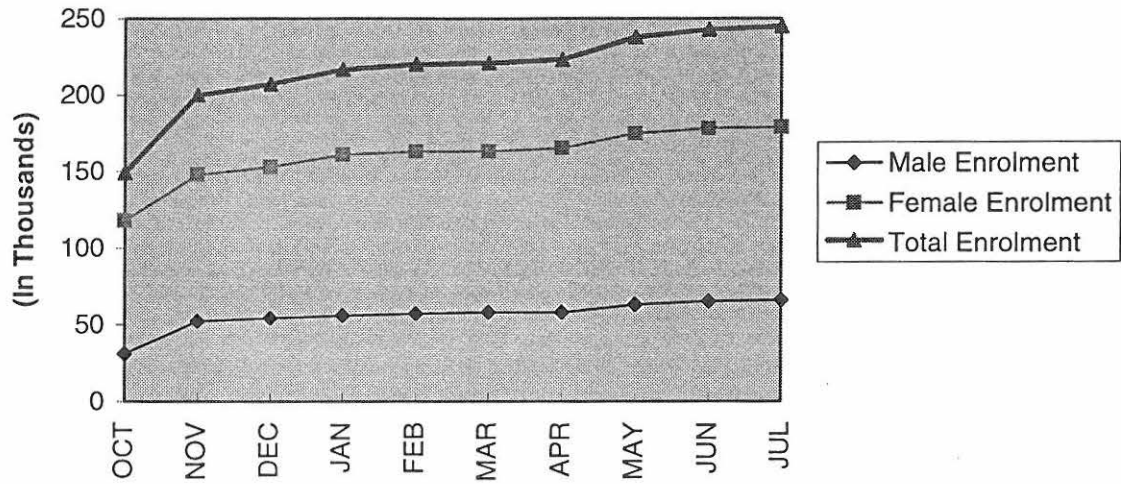
Source: Arivoli Iyakkam in Pudukkottai District: A Status Study by Economist Group, Madras, 1993.

Figure 2
Attendance of Learners in the Pudukkottai MLC

Source: Arivoli Iyakkam in Pudukkottai District: A Status Study by Economist Group, Madras, 1993.

The women fared better when it came to completion of primers and the final evaluation tests. Around 79 percent of the women enrolled completed all the three primers against 71 percent of the men. 83 percent of the women and 81 percent of the men completed two of the primers.

The periodic 'tests', including the final evaluation test, were conducted in as non-threatening a fashion as possible. Remedial lessons were arranged immediately if found necessary. Generally any center or village in which the learners were taking these tests was the focus for celebrations and festivities much like graduation ceremonies. The final evaluation test was taken by 81 percent of the women enrolled as against only 58 percent of the men. These figures are revealing. The women were probably not afraid to be tested and found wanting. Instead, these tests provided them an opportunity to try out the new skills they had acquired.

Table 6

Pudukkottai Mass Literacy Campaign : Figures at a Glance (in '000)

	Male	Female	Total
Total population, 1991	662	665	1327
Population 7 years and above, 1991	569	575	1144
Non-literate population, 1991	253	414	667
Non-literate population, 9-45 years as per survey	90	202	292
Enrollment in literacy centers	66	180	246
Addition to the literate pool through the MLC[15]	56	150	206

Source: Arivoli Iyakkam in Pudukkottai District: A Status Study by Economist Group, Madras, 1993.

CONSOLIDATION-EVALUATION PHASE

It is customary to identify the closing stage of the teaching-learning phase as the phase of consolidation, mopping up and transition to the post-literacy stage. During this phase the weak pockets were identified and extra input given to the volunteers to mobilize and teach the learners.

Outside evaluation was also done to ascertain the status of the project. Learning competencies in literacy and numeracy can be evaluated easily. However, the functionality and social awareness components are qualitative in character and not amenable to simple scalar measurement. So even in terms of evaluation of outcomes, one has to go beyond the more readily measurable literacy and numeracy norms and must look at qualitative aspects central to functionality and awareness. Further an evaluation of measurement of learning outcomes confines its attention exclusively to the designated target learners. In a people's movement for literacy, however, the campaign process is characterized by a dialectical, two-way learning. Every participant in the MLC (including the organizers, trainers and instructors) is in a nontrivial sense a learner. This is especially true for women. Greater self confidence, a new

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[15] This figure includes all learners who had completed the first two primers prescribed by the DLS.

resourcefulness and presence of mind to tackle complex situations, an enhanced ability to manage interpersonal relationships, effective communication skills, greater gender sensitivity, a more keenly felt humanism—all these and more are skills and strengths that many a participant in the MLC acquired as a consequence of the campaign process.

POST-LITERACY

Preparation for post-literacy took place in the third phase of the campaign. Expert opinion suggests that post-literacy should commence when roughly one third of the learners have completed the primers. The post literacy phase is usually funded by government for about three years after which it is expected that the participatory structures created will take the campaign along.

Literacy skills acquired by learners in a rapid-fire campaign of the MLC type, with barely 200 hours of instruction under generally unenviable conditions are rather fragile. An important task of post-literacy is to stabilize and strengthen the literacy skills of the neo-literates. Secondly, while in the literacy stage of MLC, the learning process is primarily guided by the volunteer instructor, the objective in post-literacy is to move from guided learning to self learning. The neo-literates should become self-reliant and independent in their learning. This is all the more important for women who could go back to their cloistered lives for lack of sufficient follow up and continuity of the program. Thirdly, post-literacy seeks to link learning with action for development, at both the individual and the collective, social levels. Thus 'communitization' is an essential objective of post-literacy, the grounds for which arise both from life-experiences of the learners and the functionality and awareness components of literacy they have acquired in the MLC.

Pudukkottai district has completed two years of the post-literacy phase. The organization structure of the post-literacy project is a little different from that of the MLC. Neo-literates gather in post-literacy circles of 30 to 40 learners to learn and discuss issues relevant to them. As of July 1993, 4456 circles were actively functioning with an attendance of 88,000 women and 24,000 men.

There are essentially two aspects of learning in the post-literacy phase. The first consists of structured learning and the other the planning and carrying out a variety of mass campaigns. The activities undertaken included campaigns for women's equality, health, universalization of primary education, legal literacy, creation of scientific awareness and environmental protection.

Post-literacy also has the aim of making education in all its dimensions a concern of the community. A very important agenda is the universalization of primary education. It is often argued that to expend resources on adult literacy campaigns while primary education is far from being universalized is to 'mop the floor without closing the tap'. This is a fallacious argument that unnecessarily counterposes primary education and adult education. The simple truth is that literate parents, especially literate mothers, provide the best guarantee that children will be sent to and retained at school against all odds. A mass literacy campaign creates a highly favorable environment for ensuring universal primary education by creating a community consciousness in favor of education, and by generating participatory popular structures at the grassroots level which can provide the organizational basis for a people's movement for Universal Primary Education (UPE). UPE is thus a key objective in the post-literacy stage. In May-June (the start of the school year) of 1993, a district campaign to

enroll all children in the 5-8 age group was launched. Out of the 3000 children identified as being out of school, nearly 2500 were successfully enrolled as a result of the campaign. This was part of an ongoing process of campaigning for universal primary education.

A popular movement for book collection and formation of rural libraries was started during the later half of 1992. In March 1993 a campaign of education for women's equality was conducted as part of the nationwide *Samata* campaign.

The district reacted to important happenings in the country. The demolition of the *Babri Masjid* mosque was followed by a powerful campaign on communal harmony. Taking a cue from the anti-arrack (liquor) campaign in Nellore, anti-arrack demonstrations were held throughout the district from February 1993.

In July 1993, a campaign for promoting health awareness which focused in particular on women's health was taken up, with assistance from the state government's department of health. The *kalajatha* or the street theater form was once again the main campaign methodology.

The post-literacy phase is still under way in the district and new territories are being chartered again. There are no successful models yet and one will have to evaluate the Pudukkottai experience to learn new lessons.

GENDER IMPACT OF MLCs

In most MLCs across the country there has been a visible participation of women in the campaign as learners and volunteers. This was true of Pudukkottai also. However, in Pudukkottai there was a massive participation of women not only as learners and instructors but also as Master Trainers, Resource Persons, *kalajatha* artistes, organizers and full-time coordinators. Kannamal was an official of a public sector life insurance company in Pudukkottai. She was enthusiastic and willing to join the campaign. She offered her services as a volunteer to teach ten learners. Recognizing her potential she was persuaded to accept the post of the district level central coordinator. Kannamal realized her strengths while working in the campaign. She now tours the entire country and relates her experience of working as an organizer in the campaign and motivates other women to join similar campaigns.

The campaign thus empowered not only the learners but also the women organizers. Nallamuthu, a sub-block coordinator recounted this story about herself. "I used to be totally under the control of my husband and did not protest even when he brought another woman home. Somehow I gathered courage to divorce him but I still felt bad about myself. Joining the campaign has helped me grow. Today I am a confident full-time *Arivoli* worker. The other day I was returning home on my two-wheeler at about 11.30 at night, after a literacy convention and a *kalajatha* performance in one of the villages. I had offered to drop Karuppiah, the student youth convenor, at his house. On the way back one of my tires developed a puncture. We were stranded in a remote place almost in pitch darkness. Karuppiah and I walked the five kilometers back to our homes. I was not bothered that people might gossip. I cannot believe that I am the same person who used to tremble in silence and not tell a soul when my drunken husband used to beat me."

If one considers the learners, the attendance of women learners at the learning centers and the acquisition of literacy skills by them was impressive. But the success of a MLC is not reflected in this alone. The real 'success' of the campaign lay in the fact that it touched the psyche of the

women. The process by which they acquired literacy was as important as the literacy skills attained by them. It was a process which empowered and brought the women together. For the men, while the acquisition of literacy was certainly empowering it could not have had the same significance as it did for the women. For the women the literacy center bridged the inside-outside dichotomy of their lives. It was a 'legitimate' activity which helped them step outside their homes.

MOBILITY

In Pudukkottai the MLC was linked to numerous other activities and 'popular movements' in the district. In addition to the National Literacy Mission's four components of literacy, a fifth component mobility[16] (operationalized in the field as learning the skill of cycling) was added to the campaign in Pudukkottai. Around 60,000 women learned to cycle during the first year of the campaign alone. Latest figures put this at well over 200,000. Cycling as an activity is generally 'discouraged' if not banned for girls and women in most parts of rural Tamil Nadu. Learning to bicycle had a tremendous effect on the consciousness and confidence levels of the women. To popularize bicycling among the women, bicycle races, rallies and loans were organized. For the women, learning a skill which had been classified a 'male' prerogative signified the breaking of rigid gender barriers. Cycling was learned not only by the learners and neo-literates but also by the women volunteers and organizers. Many of the women demanded loans to buy cycles, for they could see their daily chores of fetching water, fuel, food etc., becoming much easier. Women belonging to the 'lower' oppressed castes cycled through the 'higher' caste habitations, where earlier they could only walk barefoot. Somehow, the freedom that cycling engendered gave women a new courage. Cycling had taken on the dimensions of a social movement.

The women full-timers also learned to ride mopeds and two-wheelers (a kind of motorcycle). The confidence with which these women rode their vehicles to rallies, meeting and centers inspired other women.

ANTI-DOWRY CAMPAIGN

Marriage was another institution that was affected by the campaign. Many of those involved in the campaign chose to get married to their colleagues irrespective of their caste or religion. Such marriages took place without dowries.[17] Many of the men involved in the campaign felt that the campaign had made them very conscious of women's issues and problems. Dowry was also one of the main issues that was addressed in the *kalajathas* of the post-literacy phase.

QUARRY EXPERIMENT

Next to agriculture, stone mining or quarrying is the other most important occupation in the district. There are around 500 quarries in the district owned by the government. These quarries are auctioned out for a period of 1-3 years. The quarries were usually taken on auction by contractors who employed laborers to work in the quarries. These laborers were paid a meager

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[16] The concept of mobility as a component of a Mass Literacy Campaign was introduced by the author in Pudukkottai. This was the first time in any campaign that mobility (that is learning the skill of cycling) was systematicaly used as a means to empower women.

[17] Money and gifts given by the bride's family to the bridegroom at the time of their marriage.

sum of Rs. 5-7 ($ 0.15-0.21) per day and led a wretched existence. Most of them were indebted to their employers, who used this indebtedness to exploit and keep them in conditions of bonded labor. These men and women being illiterate could not understand the interest calculations and other deductions made by the contractors. At the end of a year's hard labor, the laborers found themselves more in debt and were forced to borrow money again.

As a district administrator, I had some discretion with regard to granting of government quarry leases. A decision was taken to lease the quarries to the groups of women laborers who worked them. The quarries were given on lease to groups of 20-50 women who had registered themselves as societies under the Tamil Nadu Registration of Societies Act. Around 130 quarries were given to 4500 women. Each society had informally elected presidents, vice-presidents, and treasurers.

The quarries were leased to these groups for three years on payment of a small initial deposit. A seigniorage (tax) on stones actually mined and transported was also to be paid to government. This was convenient for them as they did not have to incur the high initial auction payment. They also did not have to participate in auctions where quarry contractors colluded to form illegal syndicates to keep out competition.

While both men and women worked in the quarries, a conscious decision was taken to grant the lease to women. From an efficiency point of view this was the most logical decision as the earnings went directly to the family and did not get spent in the local liquor shop. But more important was that the decision empowered the women as they were officially 'in charge'.

Most of the women were illiterate, and many belonged to the socially oppressed classes and yet they faced the wrath of the contractors and middlemen with courage. They were threatened, their tools were stolen. Lorry strikes were instigated so that the women would not be able to transport the stones that had been mined. There was a social boycott and shopkeepers in the village were instructed not to sell to them. Loans that had been given years back by the contractors were recalled. Relatives and friends of the quarry workers, who were employed by the contractors were ousted. The district administration, including the police, gave the women protection to work in their quarries. Lorry strikes were 'broken' by the administration bringing in lorries from other districts.

Most important, however, was the support that the literacy campaign gave these women. Literacy volunteers took on the 'job' of teaching these women not only to read and write but simple accounting skills as well. With the help of the Resource Persons and full-time personnel of the MLC leadership, training camps were organized for them. The literacy volunteers formed the much needed support group for the quarry workers. The women slowly gained in confidence and were able to 'handle' the conflict-ridden situations. They stood up to the contractors and middlemen and asserted their rights. They went to the banks and deposited money, they went to the government offices to get their permit slips, and they took decisions about how their money could be spent. Most of them decided to send their children to schools and some decided to refurbish their huts with better roofing, others built small new houses, yet a few others acquired gold jewelry (a status symbol in India). They even paid their husband 'wages' for working in their quarries.

While the economic transformation in the lives of the quarry workers has been remarkable, the change that the process brought in the thinking of these people was even more so. Vasantha (belonging to the Scheduled Caste[18]) had learned to cycle and she had gone whizzing past the erstwhile contractors unmindful of their disapproval. She and her family had also started bathing in the in the village pond where the 'upper caste' members bathed, an act of temerity, which would earlier have brought swift retribution. Anjali, another Scheduled Caste quarry worker says "I have only one life and I will live it bravely."

Surprisingly, the men did not react adversely to the women being in charge of the quarries. Many of them felt that the women made better 'employers' than the erstwhile contractors. Some counseling of the men had also been done along with the training for the women. The quarry leases given to the women have to be renewed by government in 1994. There is considerable lobbying by the erstwhile contractors to bring the quarries for auction rather than giving it on lease to the women workers. A quarry women's federation has been formed in Pudukkottai and they have obtained a temporary stay from the courts restraining the government from auctioning the quarries.

The government had not lost any revenues by leasing the quarries to the women quarry workers. In fact, since the women were paying taxes on the basis of stones actually mined and there was less illicit quarrying, the government got increased revenues. This has also been represented in the courts and to the State government. Vasantha and Anjali have become good public speakers exhorting the other quarry workers to continue their struggle.

GEM-CUTTING

Technology is rarely gender-neutral. Whenever new technology has been introduced in India it has invariably been accompanied by displacement of women. For example, the Green Revolution in India during the 60s was accompanied by adoption of modern agricultural practices and introduction of new machinery. Many women who had been traditionally involved in agricultural work were rendered jobless because there was no attempt to retrain them in the new agricultural practices or in operating the new machinery.

Gem cutting and polishing has been a traditional activity in Pudukkottai. Most of the work of cutting, polishing and faceting the semi-precious stones or cubic zirconia (American diamonds as it is popularly called) was done manually. As part of the government's anti-poverty schemes the district administration drew up a plan to introduce semi-automatic machines for the polishing and cutting of gems, especially cubic zirconia. This would be a micro enterprise supported by institutional finance for those below the poverty line. Such technology would normally be monopolized by men. A decision was therefore taken by the district administration that training in the semi-automatic machines would be given first to women only. The general milieu in the district which encouraged participation of women helped this project also. Initially 200 women were given the training and the loans to buy the new machines and the working capital needed for the project. By the end of two years about 1500 women had acquired these machines. Many of them had become small entrepreneurs employing two to four women

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[18] So called because they have been specifically listed out in a Schedule to the Constitution of India. The Scheduled Castes are socially oppressed 'untouchable' castes which have been granted certain constitutional protection and privileges.

themselves. Many women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and conservative Muslim families were able to participate in the program because they had learned to read and write. Thaju Begum comes from a conservative Muslim family and was 37 years old. She joined the literacy center and learned to read, write and bicycle. She became eligible for the gem cutting training program because she could read and write. Thaju Begum goes to her gem cutting training center on her bike but still wearing her white *purdah* over her saree. Her confidence belies her appearance. She says " I am indebted to my teacher Amudha who made all this possible for me. Without knowing how to read and write I would not have been eligible for the training program. I recently bought a secondhand bike for Rs. 300 (around $ 10) and I go to the training center on my cycle. My husband and I even go to the cinema by cycle and I take my young son on the back seat of the cycle. I am happy."

Devadasis are a caste group which 'dedicate' their women to the temples. The women are forbidden to marry and are expected to spend their lives in the service of the gods. In actual practice, the custom degenerated into prostitution. Forty women belonging to the Devadasi community also participated in the gem cutting program and were able to break free of their traditional bondage.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The government implements many anti-poverty programs at the district level. In these programs, a certain percentage of the benefits are earmarked for women. Invariably, the woman would merely be a name-lender with the actual benefits (such as loans and subsidies) being given to the man. In the empowering climate created by the MLCs, the women came forward to receive loans and subsidies themselves. More than 15,000 micro-enterprises were established mainly in non-traditional sectors. For example, since cycling was becoming popular, women were encouraged to set up cycle repair shops and were given training to do so.

Mohanasundari was widowed when she was 25. She set up a cycle repair shop and had this to say "I have three children. I was living a difficult life earning only about Rs. 5-7 ($ 0.15-0.20) per day and could hardly feed my kids. I have acquired a skill and a livelihood. I am independent and no longer a social outcast." Women were helped not only to start their own business ventures, they were also encouraged to handle all the cash themselves. This was empowering to the women who had in the past found themselves doing all the work except the marketing, when husbands would step in and take away the money. While the anti-poverty programs of government were linked to the literacy campaign, great caution was exercised in not promising any of the volunteers or the learners loans and subsidies merely because they had participated in the campaign. Demand for such loans and subsidies would have been far greater than the government's capacity to extend them. However, the women were encouraged to question social inequities.

OTHER INCIDENTS

Two young girls of Maniambalam village in the district were climbing coconut trees to prove a point. When Gomathi was asked why she had learned to climb a coconut tree she said " In my primers there are lessons that tell me that women can do anything, so I decided that I would learn to climb a coconut tree of which there are plenty in my village." Bhuvaneshwari, the women's block convenor was quick to point out "If women have climbed the Himalayas, is a coconut tree too much for us?"

Devi was a 22 year old girl who lived in Aranthangi block of the district. She had never attended school before and decided to attend the literacy center in her village. She had barely attended the center for two months when she was sent off to Kuwait to work as a housemaid. In Kuwait, the family for whom she was working, abused and ill-treated her. She was isolated and not allowed to meet anyone. Luckily for Devi, she remembered the little she had learned in the literacy center and wrote a letter. She managed to hand over the letter one morning to the street cleaner who promised to post the letter for her. The letter was received by her sister living in Pudukkottai and was brought to the district authorities. The middleman who had arranged to send Devi to Kuwait was contacted. He got in touch with his counterpart in Kuwait. A message was sent saying that Devi's sister was seriously ill and that Devi should be sent back immediately. Devi arrived in Pudukkottai within a short time. Though traumatized by her experience, Devi is grateful that she had taken the trouble to attend the literacy classes.

ANTI-ARRACK CAMPAIGN IN NELLORE

It was in the neighboring state of Andhra Pradesh, that the power of poor rural women to direct major policy changes in government was clearly demonstrated. It all began with a lesson in the literacy primer of a MLC in Nellore district, where there was a story of how women in the fictional village of Sripuram got together and forced the village arrack[19] shop (which had been auctioned by government) to close down. In an actual village called Dobugunta in Nellore district, the women in the literacy centers were inspired by the story and they decided to enact the story in real life. The women of the village took a procession to the local arrack shop with sticks and bricks in hand and forced the shop to close down. An illustrated account of the happenings in Dobugunta village was included in the post-literacy primer issued in March 1992. This was widely discussed in the literacy centers of Nellore district and other campaign districts in Andhra Pradesh. At Jagadevipet basti[20] a neo-literate when interviewed[21] said "We read the newspapers in the Jan Chaitanya Kendra[22] and learn how fellow women struggle in other places. We too gathered before the arrack shop here and issued our ultimatum. The next day excise men came to supervise and threatened us with violence if we tried to stop sales. We

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[19] Arrack is a potent locally brewed alcoholic beverage. The right to sell arrack is auctioned by the state governments and has been the subject of controversy.

[20] Name for a lower class crowded habitation.

[21] Quoted in an article entitled "New voices" by Gowri Ramnarayan, Frontline, India,December 4,1992.

[22] Peoples' Literacy Center in Andhra Pradesh.

gheraoed[23] the excise men." The excise officials went back unable to deal with this open rebellion by women.

Similar incidents, where women refused to be cowed down and opposed the government and the arrack contractors, became common. Many women said "We are not afraid of the police or the contractor. If they arrest us, our husbands will have to look after our children."[24] The bold action taken by these women triggered a massive social movement which spread first within the district of Nellore and then to the entire state of Andhra Pradesh, with the help of literacy activists and other women's groups. The government had to respond to the women's agitation. It first canceled all auctions of arrack shops in Nellore district and then in the entire state by April 1992.

The women were able to stop the auction of about 700 liquor shops. The government had to forego an annual revenue of Rs. 8.4 billion ($ 250 million), out of its state budget of Rs. 7800 billion ($ 2360 million), and the patronage that goes with it. The might of the government and the power of the liquor barons had been challenged successfully by the women of Andhra Pradesh. The anti liquor campaign in Andhra Pradesh is a unique phenomenon because it was initiated and predominantly led by poor rural women. Its sheer size and scale makes it a remarkable mass movement.

SAMATA—AN EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

The Mass Literacy Campaigns released the tremendous potential and energy of women all over the country. This was harnessed in the form of a campaign for women's empowerment. The campaign was called *Samata* meaning equality. *Samata* took the form of a series of cultural events mainly *kalajathas* organized throughout the country. The *kalajathas* primarily dealt with women's issues and even controversial subjects were boldly addressed. There were eight regional troupes consisting of volunteers, majority of them women, from different districts and states of the country. The *kalajathas* were flagged off from eight different centers of the country on March 8,[25] 1993. Each troupe traveled for 30 days covering 20 states giving two to three programs per day. The regional troupes converged at Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh for a final rally and convention. The convention was attended by participants and volunteers from literacy campaigns throughout the country. The focus of the *kalajathas* and the convention was women's empowerment, education, equality and peace.

KEY PROBLEM AREAS

The MLC model which derives its inspiration from the pioneering Ernakulam campaign is still evolving. The model has achieved significant results in more than a hundred districts in just two years and has in that sense proved its viability and replicability. It has silenced critics who remained doubtful about the replicability of the model outside Kerala. However, it is a very complex model whose success is far from being guaranteed automatically. There are several key problem areas.

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[23] Form of protest where the official is surrounded and prevented from carrying out his duties.

[24] Quoted in an article entitled "New voices" by Gowri Ramnarayan, Frontline, India,December 4,1992.

[25] March 8 is International Women's Day.

Initially, when the mass literacy campaigns started, there was considerable skepticism over the possibility of mobilizing tens of thousands of volunteers and millions of learners. The success of the campaigns in Kerala was ascribed to unique features of Kerala and not seen as generalizable. However, the methodologies of motivation and mobilization in MLCs, which are being constantly enriched by accumulating campaign experiences, seem to be reasonably effective. The *kalajatha* in particular, has proved consistently effective in this regard. Nevertheless, there does exist the danger of routinization and hence of declining effectiveness, as more and more districts undertake MLCs. As work in the MLC becomes a respectable socially recognized activity it has opened up the possibility of dilution in commitment of volunteers. There is also the need to sustain motivation and retain the mobilization generated in the hectic initial phase throughout the campaign. This is a rather more difficult task, not only inherently but also because of several objective conditions. Continuity in the district leadership is essential to ensure continued involvement of officials but the district administrator who is the chairperson of the district literacy campaign committee may be transferred at any time during the campaign which results in loss of momentum and it takes time to get the campaign back in full swing.

Structural flexibility in the working of the campaign is essential. The government has to delegate powers to the district level so that decisions can be taken quickly. Since the campaign is fast-paced any delay in making decisions affect the campaign adversely.

While motivation-mobilization problems remain, the more difficult problems are encountered in the teaching-learning phase. These arise from several sources, the most important being training. Even in a small district like Pudukkottai, around 25,000 volunteer instructors and thousands of Master Trainers and Resource Persons have to be trained. While mobilizing and motivating such a large volunteer force is not an insurmountable problem, training and continuously retraining them is a real challenge both with regard to the quality and quantity.

The pool of human resources from which the Master Trainer and volunteer work force has to be drawn is not formally speaking a highly educated one. Many of the volunteer instructors may have had only six to eight years of formal education, and Master Trainers about ten to twelve years. Training them in a totally new kind of pedagogy and in the MLC philosophy of voluntarism requires tremendous effort. Inadequate training invariably results in both learner and volunteer dropout.

The other key issue is a proper volunteer support system. The support system would have to provide the volunteer with periodic academic feedback and reinforcement via properly trained Resource Persons and Master Trainers. Motivational sustenance through encouragement, recognition and field support via local people's literacy committees and literacy organizers is also critical. In order to tackle these issues, periodic training camps for Resource Persons, Master Trainers and instructors, were again organized and efforts made to build a well-knit volunteer support system by constantly revitalizing the people's committees.

Harvests and droughts, seasonal migration, school and college examinations, administrative discontinuities, political uncertainties, natural calamities and unforeseen law and order problems all these take their toll during the teaching-learning phase.

One must also consider the enormous hurdles that learners face in their daily lives which renders even mere survival a challenge. The typical learner is young, female, poor and from an oppressed social stratum. She runs her household against great odds, spends hours in the effort

to fetch fuel and water and carry out other household chores, works on her own farm or as a wage worker all day long. On return from work, she cooks for the household, serves every one and finally has her tiny share of the meal. It is at this point, tired and thoroughly exhausted, both physically and mentally that she comes to the learning center. It is creditable that many of the women had been sufficiently motivated to finish the three primers. The process was empowering in itself and for the first time the women perceived a role for themselves that was different from their and reproductive roles.

Mobilization of women will not take place spontaneously and has to be specifically addressed during all phases of the campaign. Initially it is difficult to find enough women willing to participate in the campaign as organizers but it is critical for the success of the campaign to enlist their participation.

Another key problem in MLCs particularly in the teaching-learning phase is the design of an effective management information system. In a time bound program of such a large size, it is both critical and difficult to keep track of progress on several fronts at once. Several closely related management information systems are now emerging from the field experience of MLCs but the problem remains complicated and have not always been resolved satisfactorily on the ground.

CONCLUSION

These problem and other limitations notwithstanding, the MLC model remains the most viable option for rapidly increasing the literacy rate, especially the female literacy rate. Its cost effectiveness, decentralized and non-bureaucratic character, mass participation, time bound nature and significant multidimensional societal impact make the MLC an attractive proposition.

As a professional administrator working with the government, the author had handled large projects earlier, yet the MLC was a unique experience, not only in sheer size and complexity but also because of its breadth and multi-faceted nature. Although the success of the Ernakulam campaign in Kerala had provided a model and an inspiration, the MLC in Pudukkottai took on a character all its own and became a pioneer in mobilizing and empowering women.

The involvement of women not only as learners and volunteers, but at leadership levels, and in the organization right from the district to the grassroots levels were both very important to the success of the campaign. The relationship between the campaign and women's empowerment was essentially symbiotic and synergistic.

The MLCs of Pudukkottai and elsewhere in India have shown that even in a non-revolutionary social milieu, it is possible to initiate and carry out, with some degree of success, a MLC because there is a tremendous reserve of innate goodness and volunteer spirit which can be catalyzed despite an overwhelming ambiance of cynicism. It is possible to start with a small core of 20 to 30 committed activists and mobilize thousands of volunteers.

It would not have been possible for the core group to achieve such significant results in such a short time if they had been working alone. It required the total support of the district administration and enabling leadership at all levels. The MLC required the coming together of the governmental and non-governmental forces. This presupposes a strong commitment to team work and subordination of ego. Bureaucrats, with years of experience had to learn to

work with enthusiastic activists impatient with rules and procedures and vice versa. Committed leadership from both sides helped the two forces come together.

More than three years after the start of the campaign in Pudukkottai, the MLC spirit is still alive in the district. In spite of many ups and downs and countervailing pressures of various kinds, a majority of the 30,000 volunteers are still active in the post-literacy phase. The literacy committees and participatory structures created during the MLC process have been consolidated to a certain extent, making it the basis for launching people's movements beyond literacy, such as health for all, women's empowerment and universalization of elementary education.

The literacy activists and volunteers have been joined by thousands of neo-literate men and women who have begun to assert themselves in myriad ways. Many women had tasted freedom and power for the first time and *they* were organizing for change.

Note:

1. *This article draws heavily on a forthcoming book entitled 'Literacy and Development' by Athreya, Venkatesh and Chunkath, Sheela Rani.*

2. *A video cassette entitled 'Not by Money Alone' produced by the District Rural Development Agency, Pudukkottai gives a visual account of the campaign in Pudukkottai.*

RATIONALE AND STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING FEMALE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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*   The views expressed in this paper, which has been reproduced as received, are
those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations.

RATIONALE AND STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING
FEMALE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Introduction

Achieving universal primary education has taken high priority on national and international agendas alike for many years. It is more recently, however, that governments and multilateral agencies have recognized that, due to low parental emphasis on the education of daughters, greater government financial and political commitment is necessary in order to ensure that girls are not educationally disadvantaged. Yet, sustained government commitment to meeting the special needs of girls has been the exception rather than the rule. Enrollment expansion and the allocation of school places among young people often discriminates against girls, even when such policies are believed to be gender neutral. Thus, even though enrollments have improved somewhat for girls, large gender disparities in achievement levels, academic persistence and or enrollment rates continue in most regions of the globe.

Much of the observed bias in the distribution of educational investments results from the high private cost and low gains to the education of female children. Moreover, evidence indicates that girls have suffered disproportionately from educational cutbacks which shift educational costs to parents. Balancing the scales will require the political and financial commitment of governments to overcoming institutional biases as well as easing parental sacrifices associated with the education of their daughters. Wide recognition of the social returns to women's education indicates that, though the necessary reallocation of funds may be politically difficult, it is a step most developing countries can ill afford to delay.

Rationale

Human Rights

The tremendous potential of education to improve the quality of life has led to international recognition of education as a basic human right. Education can enhance one's ability to exercise his/her human rights as an individual, family member and participant in society. By providing the foundation for a fundamental sense of dignity and self-worth, education can create or enhance the desire for self-improvement.

To the extent that girls are educationally disadvantaged relative to boys, they should be given special priority in the design of national education policies. Greater emphasis on female education is also necessary in order to remedy social and economic imbalances which prevent women from sharing equally in

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the fruits of society. Such imbalances include women's restricted access to public and private resources and their severe under-representation within political structures. In fact, literacy campaigns themselves can provide an effective conduit form informing women about their human rights.

Women's Status and Social Returns to Female Education

It is now widely recognized that the benefits to education extend beyond a woman's own welfare, to that of her family. By raising her status within the home, education can enhance a woman's contribution to the management of household resources, often leading to greater expenditure on nutrition and health (Chatterjee 1990). An educated woman is also more likely to use resources efficiently and to utilize government health services for both herself and her children. These factors lead to improved child health and nutrition, and lower infant mortality (Schultz 1991). Thus the social returns to a woman's education extend far beyond individual welfare and may even improve the viability of government outreach efforts. Another social benefit to women's education is it's contribution to fertility decline. Beyond a threshold level of education, usually a primary certificate, each additional year of women's schooling is associated with a decline in family size (Schultz 1991). For resource constrained governments, this can ease the growing strain on fiscal budgets and improve the growth prospects for per capita incomes.

Economic Gains

It is now well established that national social returns to women's education exceeds that of men's (Summers 1992). In addition to the factors mentioned above, there are large economic gains to women's schooling (Schultz 1991). For example, women's education, particularly beyond the primary level, translates into higher economic productivity in agriculture and market activities (Herz and Khandker 1991, King 1990). Training is particularly effective in raising productivity when it is accompanied by extension services and credit (Saito and Weidemann 1990, Hossain 1988, Smith and Stelcner 1990). Where economic opportunities are available to women in the formal sector, additional schooling translates into higher wage rates and greater labor force participation (Schultz 1991).

The expansion of a woman's income earning capacity through education broadens her range of lifecycle choices, improving her prospects for leading a productive and fulfilling life. For example, a woman's ability to earn her own income reduces her dependence upon her children as a form of security in widowhood and old age (Cain 1988). She is thus freer to limit family size, enjoy more years outside of childbearing, and invest more fully in each child.

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Many social changes associated with national development are linked to women's income potential, such as rising age at first marriage and initiation into childbearing, improved child health and well being, and women's enhanced status within the household (Chatterjee 1990, Standing 1983, Leslie and Paolisso 1989). Thus, to the extent that education promotes women's economic participation, it enables them both to experience and to contribute more fully to the benefits of national development and growth.

The Intergenerational Transmission of Poverty: Breaking the Cycle

For some time it has been common knowledge that poverty or privilege tend to be transmitted from parent to child through successive generations. Public education has come to be seen as a "great equalizer" since it can alter the pattern of intergenerational transfer. However, unless the socio-economic benefits of an individual's schooling are passed along to his/her offspring, the cycle of poverty is not broken but only temporarily interrupted. We now know that between women and men, the former are far more likely to transfer human capital to their children, especially among households in which fathers are less involved in their children's upbringing or are absent for significant periods of time (Wolfe and Behrman 1984, Thomas 1989). Perhaps it is because women shoulder so many of the responsibilities of childrearing that their own socio-economic status is more critical to that of their children. Even where educational facilities are openly accessible, the enrollment status of a woman's children and/or their level of academic attainment is likely to reflect her own socio-economic status and the value she places on scholastic achievement.

The higher women's level of education and income earning potential, the higher their aspirations for their own children, particularly for daughters (King, E. et. al. 1986). Since there is strong complementarity between these two factors, the educational expectations of women for their children will be greatest where they perceive the economic returns to schooling to be high (Herz, B. and S. Khandker 1991). Government policies which link education with economic opportunities for adolescents girls and women are thus likely to be the most effective in producing sustained human capital transfer across generations, and the greatest potential spur to national growth and well-being. Within the formal education system, science and mathematics subjects command the highest economic returns for girls as they do for boys. Thus, for girls who are likely to complete both primary and secondary schooling, these areas provide the most rewarding path of study, especially where scholarships are available. But for the vast majority of girls in developing countries who will not enter the professions or

even complete secondary school, vocational or skills training in areas not traditionally pursued by women offers the potential to greatly expand their earning capacity.

Since the formal sector remains a relatively small portion of national economies in many parts of the world, skills training which leads to economic returns in the informal market should be an integral part of any program to enhance women's income earning potential (Moock, Musgrove, and Stelcner 1990, Smith and Stelcner 1990). Such programs are particularly rewarding when they are coupled with extension services which provide credit, inputs and simple technologies for women's microenterprises and small businesses (Holt and Ribe 1991). In countries where universal education remains a distant promise, skills training programs coupled with literacy classes can offer a powerful tool for providing a basic education to adolescent girls by-passed by the formal education system.

The educational needs of young adolescent girls with little or no formal education pose serious questions for policy makers, since they will soon begin to make critical decisions concerning their own futures as well as those of the next generation. Investments in the basic education and training of young adolescent girls who have not yet entered their childbearing years will be realized not only by the current generation, but also by the cohort born to them within the following 5-10 years.

The critical role that women play in disrupting the vicious cycle of poverty and low human capital investment should be reflected in greater national and international commitment to the financing and implementation of women's educational programs. Specific national guidelines for both the design and timeframe of women's educational policies are necessary in the diverse range of countries, in which this cycle can be observed.

The lessons we have learned about the tremendous social returns to investments in women's education suggest that they can also greatly enhance the effectiveness of other government programs such as family planning and health services, disease control and nutritional supplementation programs. However, female education should never be used as a substitute for other programs designed to meet basic needs. Doing so would be counterproductive since it would deprive women of the tools needed to generate social rewards.

III. Programs and Policies

We have outlined above the tremendous social returns to women's education as well as the persistant gaps in the provision of education, particularly for girls. Following the Nairobi conference in 1985, national policy mandates have increasingly stressed the importance of enhancing the educational prospects of

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girls and women. However, there remains a marked lack of
political and financial backing for the development of national
programs. Consequently, efforts to provide new educational
opportunities for girls and women have generally been restricted
to small local projects, most of which remain under the auspices
of NGOs and multilateral agencies (ABEL 1991, World Bank 1991).

The slow pace at which national policies to enhance female
education are being adopted is due in part to the tremendously
diverse and complex factors contributing to discrimination
against girls (Colclough and Lewin 1993). Successful initiatives
will vary considerably by economic, social and geographical
context. However, through the persistence of various NGOs and
aid agencies, general guidelines for implementing educational
programs for women and girls are now available (Colclough and
Lewin 1993, ABEL 1991, World Bank 1991). A general outline of
the various strategies is presented below. Though their relevance
will vary somewhat by national and cultural context they are
general enough to have some degree of pertinence for most. A
list of innovative strategies for refinancing education is also
provided. These include a variety of restructuring, cost control
and revenue raising policy measures to help cash strapped
economies raise resources for expanding their educational base.

In order to provide the rewards of a quality education to as
many students as possible, some conventional notions concerning
what constitutes formal education need to be revised. However,
reforms should not imply a sacrifice in quality, which is itself
a key factor in attracting female students.

Increasing Access to Schools

In countries where universal education has not yet been
achieved, continued increases in the total number of available
school places are generally necessary in order to enroll all boys
and girls (Colclough and Lewin 1993). The means through which
these places are allocated must be carefully considered in order
to ensure that girls are not educationally disadvantaged. The
following "supply" factors are critical to a "balanced" expansion
of educational systems and help to address existing inequities
within institutional frameworks.

1) "Open" enrollment programs used to allocate scarce school
places, such as entrance exams and "first-come first-serve"
polices often place girls at a disadvantage (ABEL 1991). In
the presence of such schemes, quotas or affirmative action
measures are necessary in order to correct these biases.
Adoption of gender neutral admission policies is preferable.
Policies which openly restrict the enrollment of girls such
as pregnancy policies or vocational channeling of boys and
girls should be dismantled (World Bank 1991).

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Since perceptions of accessibility will vary with the cultural and religious persuasion of parents, the location and structure of institutions should involve careful consideration of local characteristics. For example, parents may consider schools to be unsafe for their female children unless they are close to home, provide female teachers, and have single sex bathrooms, classrooms or even school buildings (World Bank 1991). Ignoring these factors can severely restrict their accessibility to girls.

2) Many national school systems have a strong urban bias, approaching universal education in the more expensive urban schools while rural schools remain few and underfunded (Colclough and Lewin 1993, ABEL 1991). Such programs may discriminate against girls, whose parents are reluctant to send them to live in the city for a combination of economic and safety reasons. Such policies also exacerbate rural-urban disparities and thus contribute to rural stagnation and heavy internal migration. Thus, it is important to ensure that comparable per capita funding is directed to the creation and maintenance of rural schools.

3) Until universal formal education becomes a reality, non-traditional schooling can offer the benefits of a basic education while providing critical links to both the formal education system (as has been demonstrated by the BRAC system) and to the labor market (ABEL 1991).

4) For adolescent girls and women, skills training and income generation schemes are valuable components of educational programs (Colclough and Lewin 1993, Stromquist 1994). Such programs should be designed to enhance women's earning potential, particularly in high productivity fields, which are usually dominated by men. Where possible, basic literacy classes should be coupled with the training components of extension services, particularly those which promote agricultural productivity and the development of women's micro-enterprises. Offering basic literacy in tandem with training programs which include simple reading materials can improve the retention of reading skills and thus the cost-effectiveness of literacy campaigns.

However, studies have indicated that often women are absent from training and extension programs even where they are not explicitly excluded (Saito and Weidemann 1990, Berger 1985). For example, collateral and credit history requirements often render women ineligible for government extension services, and many programs simply give first preference to men. Removing implicit biases in the delivery of government programs presents an almost costless means of increasing human capital investments in women.

Raising the Net Private Returns to Education

Though expanding school places is usually a necessary prerequisite to achieving universal enrollment, it is not sufficient in areas where demand is low. Because parents are generally the "gate keepers" who determine whether or not their children will attend school (where the opportunity exists), educational alternatives must be perceived as socially and economically rewarding (Lloyd and Gage-Brandon 1993). With relatively few exceptions, these requirements tend to discriminate against girls, for whom the perceived private returns to education are generally lower and whose opportunity costs at home in terms of foregone child care, household work and market activities can be substantial (Lloyd 1993). Thus measures to raise the returns to the education of girls and reduce the related monetary and opportunity costs play a critical role in raising female enrollments (Colclough and Lewin 1993, World Bank 1991). The following are strategies through which these problems can be addressed.

> 1) Lowering the direct costs of schooling to parents is probably the single most important step in raising demand for girls' education and may be accomplished through a combination of the following strategies.

> > a) The provision of scholarships to girls permits the selective reduction or elimination of school fees. They may also be used to defray the costs of uniforms, books and lunches which comprises an important component of cost reduction schemes, but is are generally not sufficient to significantly increase female enrollments (ABEL 1991). Programs which have been successful in overcoming barriers to female primary school enrollment demonstrate the importance of free education for girls, especially where the perceived private net returns are very low or negative (ABEL 1991, Colclough 1993b).

> > b) Creating work study programs for girls or linking classes to income generation programs can lower the private costs of schooling (Colclough and Lewin 1993).

> > c) Locating schools within target communities or establishing satellite schools can eliminate boarding or transportation fees which are prohibitively high for many parents (Colclough and Lewing 1993).

> 2) In many families, girls make critical contributions to family survival through household work, child care and

economic activities. Policies which eliminate or reduce the
opportunity costs of student attendance can dramatically
increase enrollment among girls whose parents are otherwise
amenable (or even indifferent) to their education (Colclough
1993, ABEL 1991). The following programs can thus greatly
encourage female school attendance.

a) Creches and child care facilities adjacent to
schools can help ensure that class attendance does not
preclude the child care responsibilities of girls (ABEL
1991).

b) Locating schools close to target groups reduces
travel time to and from school, leaving more time for
girls to complete their chores (Colclough and Lewin
1993).

c) Enhancing the flexibility of the formal
education system to meet the needs of the local
population can greatly improve the educational
prospects of may young people, especially girls.
Experience from successful non-traditional
schooling programs demonstrates that scheduling
classes according to the time constraints of
children can greatly improve the enrollment and
attendance of girls (ABEL 1991, Colclough and
Lewin 1993). Appropriate scheduling usually
involves early morning or evening classes, when
children are least likely to be needed by their
parents. Seasonal school breaks during periods of
peak economic or agricultural activity are also
important .

Another lesson to be learned from successful non-
traditional programs is that it is possible to shorten
the school day by condensing primary school curricula,
without sacrificing skills attained by the students.
Educational standards under these conditions are
maintained through innovative teaching methods such as
active learner centered approaches, peer tutoring and
the use of contextually relevant curricula (ABEL 1991,
Colclough and Lewin 1993).

3) Increasing the private returns to the education of girls
may be as important as reducing its costs. For a variety of
reasons the perceived economic rewards to the education of
girls are usually lower than they are for boys. Several
factors contributing to these perceptions are the lower
income earning potential of women in the labor market, the
channeling of girls into traditional non-technical subjects
in school, enrollment barriers to girls at higher levels of
education and vocational schools, and taboos concerning

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women's schooling and employment (King and Hill 1991). Altering these perceptions will require careful reform of educational systems in order to raise the private economic and social benefits from the education of girls. A number of promising reforms are listed below.

a) Girls should be encouraged to pursue mathematics and science subjects which are associated with higher returns in the labor market (World Bank 1991).

b) Raising the quality of instruction and materials tends to benefit girls more than boys, and improves the perceived gains to their education (World Bank 1991).

c) Since scholastic achievement levels for girls are generally higher in all-girls schools, establishing single-sex schools as an alternative to co-educational systems can improve educational standards (ABEL 1991). Research concerning the reasons for girls' improved performance in single-sex schools, should provide interesting implications for co-educational reforms.

d) Expanding vocational training programs and removing barriers to girls' enrollment can improve women's employment prospects while helping to change public perceptions concerning women's proper economic roles.

e) Developing links between primary or non-formal schools and secondary or vocational schools helps to ensure the potential for girls to continue their schooling. Such linkages raise the potential gain to primary schooling and can greatly enhance female enrollments (ABEL 1991).

f) But the most critical factor determining the returns to a girl's education is the potential for economic reward once she has completed her schooling. Macro-economic policies to enhance women's income earning capacity are thus a key element of any program to raise female educational enrollment (World Bank 1991). A first step is to remove any gender biases in government personnel recruitment, extension services, provision of credit and resources, employment programs, etc. Affirmative action policies are also important, as are programs to promote women's small businesses and micro-enterprises.

Increasing Public Support for Female Education

Grass roots public awareness campaigns operating in conjunction with NGOs, media, and community organizations can

greatly improve attitudes towards the education of girls, mobilize public support and lead to valuable community input into the design of educational programs (ABEL 1991, World Bank 1991).

Refinancing Educational Institutions

Prolonged fiscal crises and budget constraints have forced governments around the globe to reassess their educational institutions (Colclough and Lewin 1993, Colclough 1993). For many countries, prevailing economic conditions make it difficult or impossible to expand the educational base within the existing institutional framework. And though universal primary education is crucial to national development it remains only a remote possibility in many countries. These problems have led to increasing scrutiny of educational finance and institutional structure.

For the poorest countries, foreign assistance will be necessary in order to expand the educational base or even to restore pre-1980s enrollment rates. However, for most countries internal restructuring both within educational institutions and across government sectors can release funds for the expansion of primary school services. The following list of policy reforms offers a variety of mechanisms for increasing the cost-effectiveness of educational budgets[1]. They should be regarded with caution and applied only where savings are possible without serious sacrifices in quality.

Reducing Costs per Child

The total cost of providing education to children includes the value of school supplies and teacher/staff salaries, as well as capital costs associated with school facilities. In order to reduce per child costs governments must either cut total expenditure on these items or use them more intensively.

Expenditure on capital may be lowered by using local labor and supplies, as opposed to expensive imports. Another approach is to use low cost, low maintenance structures built with the assistance of the local community. In many countries, however, capital costs have already be cut drastically, along with teacher salaries and teaching materials, severely threatening the quality of education. Since countries with low levels of enrollment are often those which have experienced the greatest cuts in educational spending, increasing the intensity of resource use is

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[1] The following policy recommendations for improving the cost-effectiveness of resource allocation have been drawn from a number reports concerning educational reform: Colclough and Lewin 1993, World Bank 1991, Stromquist 1991, Colclough 1993, and Chowdhury 1993)

probably the most promising approach to reducing unit costs.

School materials and facilities may be used more intensively by introducing double-shift schooling. In such programs, students are divided between morning and afternoon schedules. The doubling of the school day permits greater enrollments and by reducing demands on children's time, can diminish the opportunity costs of sending children to school. There is little evidence that the shorter school day affects student achievement when teaching techniques are adjusted in order to accommodate a condensed curriculum.

Teacher time may be used more intensively by double-shifting, reducing absenteeism, and by increasing the length of the work day, as well as the number of class days utilized for teaching. By providing assistant teachers and classroom helpers, teacher/pupil ratios may be lowered without sacrificing the quality of education. This approach has been particularly promising where peer-group learning, self-study and tutoring by older students have been introduced.

But perhaps the most promising approach to reducing the cost of education is to increase the efficiency of the students themselves. Where educational enrollments are limited, each child attending school precludes the participation of another. Thus, by reducing drop-out rates and the repetition of grades, the unit costs of providing each child with a primary degree can be significantly reduced while increasing the availability of school places. Since wastage and repetition rates are higher among girls, reducing their prevalence can diminish gender disparities. Targeting school curricula to the average student can reduce repetition and actually improve average achievement levels.

Redirecting Funds Towards Primary Education

The financial crises of the 1980s have led to deep cuts in the education sector, particularly in countries with heavy debt servicing burdens. Though the proportion of government budgets allocated to education may have changed little, large absolute declines in per child expenditures have occurred in many developing countries. These cuts threaten to halt (or even reverse) progress towards 'schooling for all'. In order to prevent this from occurring, it is necessary to increase national emphasis on primary schooling by redirecting funds within the educational system itself or shifting it from other sectors.

Reallocating funds from secondary and tertiary schooling to primary can be accomplished by reforming higher education. Appropriate measures include reducing the length of secondary and tertiary cycles, replacing subsidies with a system of fees and scholarships, introducing work study and income generation

programs to defray the costs of higher education, and reducing
the unit price of higher education relative to primary education.
The costs of providing higher education may also be recovered
through employer payroll taxes for highschool and college
graduates.

The squeezing of educational budgets has often been pursued
in the name of "fiscal responsibility". Such measures, however,
are strongly counterproductive since they undermine the human
capital stock and thus long run productivity levels. During
periods of economic decline it is wise to cut the least
productive sectors first. Thus educational expenditures,
particularly for female education, should be reduced more slowly
than other government sectors. However, this is rarely the case,
and priority is often given to less (or non-) productive sectors
such as defense and debt servicing. To the greatest extent
possible, funds should be redirected from low productivity
sectors to primary education.

Creditor nations can further the goal of universal education
by negotiating debt reduction schemes relying heavily on debt
forgiveness and innovative programs, such as "debt-for-human
capital" swaps. The total bill for achieving 'schooling for all'
is a small fraction of the estimated $170 billion capital flow
from indebted developing countries to creditor nations. By
linking debt forgiveness to increased educational expenditures,
developed countries can actively promote the spread of SFA
throughout the developing world.

The Research Imperative

The social and economic benefits to women's education
enumerated above are by no means an inevitabile outcome of the
schooling process. It is reasonable to assume that the content
and structure of schooling will determine the extent of social
returns to female educational investments. Since little is known
about the process through which this occurs, research is
necessary in order to identify the elements which produce
positive results within the most promising programs. Applying
these principals elsewhere can improve the overall benefits to
female education and possibly lower the threshold at which
education begins to yield productivity gains. Introducing basic
nutrition, health care, and family planning information into
primary and secondary curricula may also improve the social
returns to the education of girls.

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WOMEN'S ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

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EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON:
GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

PAPER ON:

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

Daniela Bertino

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.BACKGROUND

Are women given equal opportunities in accessing vocational and technical training, as suggested by 20 years of UN conventions and recommendations...?

The answer is still far from being a positive one.

Research(1) carried out in nine African countries across three sub-regions showed the following:

- The overall representation of female students in polytechnics, and most especially in technical curricula, is still very low.(See Table N.1 and N.2)

- Levels of participation and performance of girls in science and technical subjects at secondary school level are very limited, due to their poor background in mathematics and science, and to lack of exposure to technically oriented subjects at primary school level.

- Technical subjects (such as metal work, woodwork or technical drawing) are not offered in most female secondary schools.

More recent research carried out in nine Latin American countries (2) indicates that the participation of women in vocational training has noticeably increased in the past ten years, and that it reaches now 47% of the total student population.

However, if we consider the distribution of students in the different sectors, we realise that 70% of women are concentrated in finance, administration and services, while only 0.3% of women attend courses on electricity, 2% on building and construction and SME.

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(1) This research was carried out in 1990 by the ILO and the CAPA (Commonwealth Association of Polytechnics in Africa) in the framework of the Project "WITED, Women in Technical Education and Training" in the following countries: Botswana, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.
(2) The research was conducted in 1992 by the ILO, the International Training Centre of the ILO, CINTERFOR (Centro Interamericano de Investigación y Documentación sobre Formación Profesional) and the national institutions for vocational and technical training in the framework of the Project "Promoción de la participación de la mujer en la formación tecnica y profesional en America Latina"). It includes the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, R.Dominicana, Uruguay, Venezuela.

In industrial training programmes, 3 out of 10 students are girls; 2 of these, however, follow traditional courses in textile and cloth manufacturing skills.(See Table N.3)

Measurable job segregation is a consequence of this situation: women are concentrated in "traditional", low remunerated areas, with limited opportunities and career prospects.

II. OBSTACLES HINDERING WOMEN'S ACCESS TO VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

Why is the presence of women in technical training still so low?

Barriers to women's access to technical training may be classified in two macro categories:

- external barriers, including 1) the socio-cultural and educational context and 2) labour market rigidity;

- internal barriers, related to 3) the vocational technical training systems.

This categorisation may be used to make a detailed analysis the specific obstacles and to identify appropriate strategies and solutions.

1. The socio-cultural and educational context

1.1. The attitudes and sexual stereotypes existing in society at large promote the view that technical jobs as well as technical education and training programmes are the exclusive preserve of males. This has a strong influence on parents, who, in turn, influence their children.

Even though the impact of stereotypes varies from one region to another, this has been identified as a major barrier in all the researches conducted by the ILO in Latin America, Africa and the Pacific. Industrialised countries are not exempt from this influence, notwithstanding significant improvements in the promotion of equal opportunities.

It is however interesting to note how "typically male" jobs in some countries may be considered "typically female" in other regions of the world.

1.2. Gender contents and language in education, training manuals, the media

Most languages - and educational systems - use the male gender as a universal term (e.g. "Mankind" to identify the whole human race). Girls have therefore difficulties in the delicate mechanism of identification and consciousness raising, which could help them overcome the gender gap. In the awkward phase when boys and girls are looking for "models", the training and educational systems and the mass media suggest discriminating sexual stereotypes, thus orienting and strongly limiting their choices.

The absence or limited presence of positive female models in technical and technological training (trainers, teachers) and in vocational trades makes it even more difficult for a girl to give up her "traditional" role and choose a non-traditional career.

1.3. Lack of self-confidence

As a result of women's attitudes about their own roles and capabilities, the internationalization of the above mentioned stereotypes, also influence their entry into certain technical fields.

From an early age many females lack confidence in, and have a negative attitude towards science and technical subjects and careers in science or technology. There is an expectation and acceptance by women themselves of failure in these areas.

1.4. Household and family responsibilities, multiple roles of women, early pregnancies

Multiple roles played by women, including household and family responsibilities, obstruct the full time dedication which is normally considered indispensable in technical and highly-qualified jobs.

In Africa, and the Caribbean, teenage pregnancies are a serious obstacle to female enrollment and performance in vocational training. Young women who give birth in their teens not only compromise their own education and job opportunities, but also jeopardise their children's life chances.

1.5. Lack of support services and facilities for children

Most mothers experience serious problems in holding technical jobs as well as in attending training programmes, due to a total or partial lack of public services to care for children during flexible working hours.

2. Labour market

2.1. Labour market analysis

In many countries, both in the industrialized and developing worlds, the mechanisms to analyse and predict labour market trends, as well as the relationships between these mechanisms and the vocational training systems, are weak. Moreover, there is no gender concern.

Very often, no sex-disaggregated data are collected, which hampers a correct analysis of the real situation, identifying job segregation and detecting specific groups with specifics needs and dynamics.

On many occasions, during the UN decades for the advancement of women, UN agencies, NGOs and researchers advocated identifying and adopting new indicators, to better analyse, quantify and give value to the participation of women in the labour market. But the results are still unsatisfactory.

During the previously mentioned survey in Latin America, a recommendation came from the vocational training institutions, to develop new indicators taking into consideration the fact that women:

- are often to be considered as self-employed, or as unpaid household workers rather than as paid workers;

- in the agricultural sector, carry out seasonal rather than permanent jobs;

- are more often underemployed rather than formally "unemployed";

- are involved in various and simultaneous economic activities rather than in one main activity;

- do not consider themselves economically-active and often do not define themselves as workers.

2.2. Labour market policies

Following analysis and discussion, a recent European seminar on "women and employment"(3) concluded that "Women's representatives are seldom involved in elaborating and implementing labour market policies. That is why these policies do not always include the promotion of equal opportunities within their objectives. A gender perspective is missing in the analysis of the economic situation and of the labour market". Labour market characteristics and existing segregation patterns strongly influence women's training choices.

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(3) *"European Seminar on Women and Work", organized by the EU, the Italian Ministry of Labour, the ILO and the International Training Centre of the ILO, Turin, 22-23 march 1994*

Would you care to follow a training for a trade or job you will never or scarcely ever be able to enter?

The main obstacles encountered by women in entering into technical and technological jobs are the following:

2.2.1. Low qualification, in particular low previous technical experience and practice.

Women have less opportunity then men to follow on-the-job training. Entrepreneurs often refuse to train women "because they disturb the (male) working environment".

2.2.2. Stereotypes regarding women's ability and competence in technical jobs result in women not always being given the opportunity to prove their worth.

2.2.3. Silent stereotyping exists within many employing organizations which limits women's career prospects.

Employers also mention as obstacles to women's employment, their presumed higher degree of absenteeism (again, more a stereotype than a statistical evidence), the legislation concerning maternity protection and child care and the lack of technical skills.

There is a growing trend for professional women to stay in the labour market, despite difficulties in conciling family and work responsibilities. However, employers are reluctant to finance vocational training activities for women, giving as a pretext discontinuity in their career and professional path.

2.2.4. Discriminatory selection criteria and practices in fact prevent women from accessing non-traditional jobs. When applying for a position requiring a certain degree of skill and responsibility, women's ability to exercise authority over male incumbents or their availability and flexibility in terms of working hours are normally questioned. There is proven evidence that for the same managerial or highly technical position, a woman is asked for more educational credits than a man.

2.2.5. Labour insertion practices in the new market economies limit the intervention of public or tripartite institutions. These have less and less control over employers as regards gender discrimination in selecting, promoting and even firing personnel. Women, and in particular less qualified ones, are suffering more than men from current economic crises.

2.2.6. In certain situations, sexual harassment is a serious, sometimes hidden, obstacle to women's employment. Insertion of women in traditionally male sectors or in conditions of professional competition arouses resistance and aggressive behaviour. The risk of facing this type of problem is a source of de-motivation for women.

3. Barriers within the vocational training systems.

3.1. Personnel

As mentioned in point 1.2., women are poorly represented in the technical teaching faculty, especially in the male dominated areas (see table n.4).

In Latin America, only 17% of high level directors or managers in vocational training institutions are women.

There is a direct proportion between the presence of women as technical teachers and managers in training institutions and the number of girls who enrol for technical courses and are motivated to enter into technical fields.

There is a strong need to convince male V.E.T. policy makers to increase the number of women in VTI staff.

3.2. Career guidance

There is a general lack of effective career guidance and counselling for both boys and girls, and few links with the evolution of the labour market.

When career guidance programmes are offered, they tend to repeat the stereotyped division of labour.

Very often information and guidance materials (guides, leaflets, TV spots, etc) are gender blind, presenting only boys in the different jobs.

3.3. The training offer

3.3.1. Curricula and training materials are often male oriented, and influenced by stereotypes (as mentioned at point 1.2).

All models presented are male examples: this frustrate girls' desire for identification in the suggested models and life patterns.

3.3.2. The time schedules of the training courses are designed without taking into account the constraints of trainees with family responsibility (very seldom delegated to the male members of the family...).

3.3.3. Male dominated areas and enterprises frequently lack of basic facilities for girls (toilets, changing rooms, etc); the attitude of male teachers toward girls who want to enter into technical "male" fields is often arrogant or patronising, with an adverse, discouraging effect.

III. SOME POSSIBLE LINES FOR ACTION

The Draft Platform for Action for the Fourth Word Conference on Women, in points 72, 73 and 74 contains some key recommendations for addressing the problem of promoting participation of women in vocational technical training.

To give our contribution to the debate on this issue, we would like to present what have been identified as major strategies and areas of action by the training institutions and social partners who have been involved in the last five years in the programmes and projects carried out by the ILO in different regions (Africa, Latin America, Asia and Pacific). This has not been an academic exercise, but a concrete and practical work. Many institutions are now implementing the action plans defined in the framework of these projects as part of their daily work. The formulation of strategies and action plans are strictly related with the major barriers identified in the different regions. However, there is a great similarity in the key issues indicated across the different regions.

In chapter II, different types of barriers (internal and external) to the vocational training institutions have been identified. The same approach should be adopted for the solutions.

1. A package of initiatives that vocational training institutions (VTI) themselves can undertake to remove detected internal barriers has been designed.

1.1. VTIs should, first of all, be aware of the problem.

In all the researches made, it has been quite difficult to collect sex-disaggregated data, in particular with reference to drop-outs.

There is a need to review female/male student participation and performance levels in technical areas, and analyse causes of failures.

1.2. Special recruitment strategies are necessary to get more female staff at decision-making level in the VTIs and as teachers of technical subjects (quotas/targets). Specific training and career development programmes for female staff together with gender awareness training for all staff should be implemented.

The creation of an "equal opportunities" unit or focal point in the VTI can be useful to promote and stimulate this process.

1.3. Major attention should be focused on labour and vocational information, guidance and counselling. Vocational guidance should be conducted in close coordination with labour market opportunities, avoiding sexual stereotypes and encouraging girl to enter all the fields offering effective job perspectives.

The adoption of a gender perspective (and language) in designing promotional materials is essential in this respect.

Good practices have been experienced in the last ten years and there is a need for sharing them at an international level. (4)

Specific reference should be made to labour and vocational guidance for adult women, especially those who wish to re-renter the labour market.

Specific approaches are needed for specific targets; studies in Europe, (e.g."Retravailler") based on a combination of individual self-assessment, guidance, pedagogical methods, communication, negotiation and technical skills, have developed methodological tools which are now adopted and adapted in many countries of the world.

1.4. Training Offer

Curricula and training materials should be reviewed, to eliminate social stereotypes, and suggest positive female models.

If necessary, bridging programmes for girls into technical programmes should be organised.(5)

In some cases, it has been suggested that special recruitment strategies for placing girls in technical courses, such as targets or quotas.

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(4) Some interesting activities in this respect are:
ARIANNA, Programme for educational and vocational guidance, Turin, Italy;
BRYT Project, in Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden)
Vocational Guidance Programmes in CONET (Argentina) , UTU (Uruguay) and SENCE
"Centro de Información y orientación para la capacitación y empleo de la mujer", INATEC, Nicaragua

(5) The following researches/studies are quite interesting:
the European Network WITEC (Women in Technology);
the "Guía para el uso no sexista de las nuevas tecnologías" (Paz Gastaudi Gil, Carmen Candioti Lopez, Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, Spain);
the materials developed by the BRYT Project;
the modules produced by CAPA in the WITED project;
the "Programa de atención técnica a la mujer" INATEC, Nicaragua

Training strategies should be reviewed to identify the best approach for each specific target and situation. (6) Training and sensitization modules on gender and employment should be developed for students and VTI personnel.

Time schedules for the training offered should be reviewed, to be more compatible with women's other responsibilities.

Flexible accommodation and support facilities for female students should be provided.

In the poorest countries incentives should be given to families, to minimize the "risk" in investing in girl's education and training. (The dilemma in reserving limited resources for children's education is almost always solved in favour of sons).

2. To remove socio-cultural barriers and stereotypes is a longer and more difficult challenge.

2.1. Sensitization, education, promotional and mass-media campaigns on equal opportunities in training and employment should be organized jointly by VTIs, Ministries of Labour, National machineries for the promotion of Equal Opportunities, Employers' association and Trade Unions.

These campaigns, if well designed and targeted, can have a tremendous impact on social attitudes. Many impressive campaigns have been implemented all over the world: there is a need to exchange information, materials and experiences.

2.2. Actions should be undertaken to strengthen networks of women working in the media to support these campaigns.

2.3. Specific measures should be taken, if necessary through specific legislation, to avoid the inappropriated use of women in advertising, which can suggest wrong models and promote violence against women.

2.4. There should be family planning education campaigns including reproductive health and rights, to help avoid teenage pregnancies and make girls conscious of reproductive life and sexuality.

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(6) *A good reference for a methodological framework and innovative approach to analyse this issue is the document "Accompagner les femmes dans leur formation - la formation professionnelle des femmes", ETC, Direction Générale Emploi, Relations industrielles et affaires sociales, Fréderique Deroure, V/1192/90-FR, juin 1990.*
In particular the chapter on: "Former les femmes; une approche pédagogique différente", pp. 101-107.

2.5. Legal literacy and an information campaign on women's rights in employment are vital complements to the above strategy (7)

3. LABOUR MARKET

3.1. Governmental Institutions should adopt gender disaggregated data and create new indicators to better identify and give the correct value to the participation of women.

3.2. Active labour market policies should be gender sensitive; the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment in the labour market should be an integrated aim of all labour policies.

3.3. Social partners (trade unions, employers' organisations, NGOs) and national machineries for the promotion of women should be involved.

3.4. Mechanisms should be developed and reinforced to link the labour market with the educational and training system

4. NETWORKING

4.1. In the last ten years many programmes, projects, materials, practices have been tried and implemented. There is a vital need to network and exchange these materials. Networks such as IRIS in Europe can be reproduced in other regions, to avoid duplication of energies and develop useful synergies and horizontal cooperation.

4.2. Initiatives like the "European Forum on vocational and technical training for women" organized by IRIS in 1992, give participants the possibility of seeing all the materials produced in Europe, new programmes, curricula and approaches. There is a need to invest in this area, to improve what already exists instead of starting from scratch.

4.3. Networking is also a key to sustainability and cooperation.

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(7) ILO and its International Training Centre have produced a training and information kit on "Equality for women in employment" to organize such types of campaigns.

IV. COSTS AND RESOURCES

Many of the suggested actions do not need any financial support; they are based on the progressive adoption of a gender perspective and a determined will to promote equal opportunities as a priority.

For example, many VTIs involved in the previously mentioned ILO programmes are already implementing plans of action, which were designed to be sustainable, taking into consideration the financial constraints of each institution. In many cases the key point is how to convince the policy and decision makers of the importance of the issue.

Other activities, such as mass media campaigns, are much more expensive. Coordinated efforts are then needed involving all the partners, including the international community. Networking and coordination between different countries, agencies and donors will facilitate the task, minimize the costs and avoid duplications.

Training of planners and trainers on the gender implications of employment and technical training as well as the development of pilot modules to be adapted to the national/local context, is vital to multiply the impact of the message.

Periodical evaluation and exchange forums should be organized by regions, to monitor the advancement of equal opportunities in education, technical training and employment, as well of the cost effectiveness of programmes implemented.

Table 1

Distribution of students by gender in selected primary and secondary schools and polytechnics in the 3 Regions in 1988/1989

Kenya (Eastern)	Malawi (Southern)	Ghana (Western)
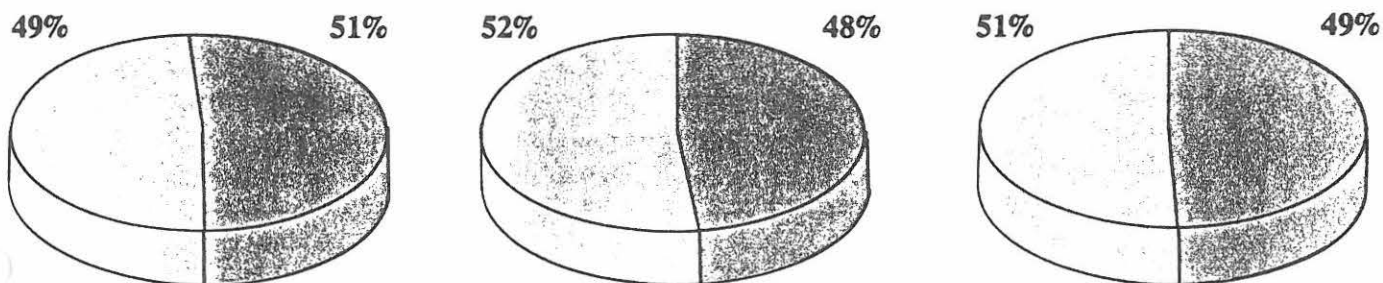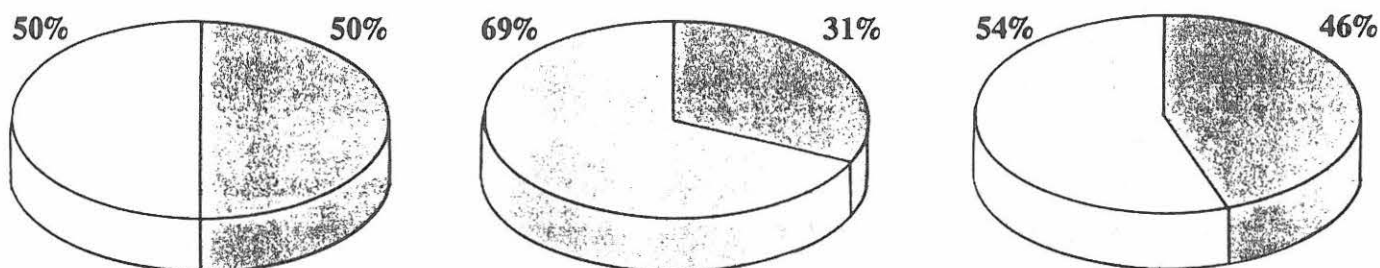
Primary level

Kenya	Malawi	Ghana
49% — 51%	52% — 48%	51% — 49%

Secondary level

Kenya	Malawi	Ghana
50% — 50%	69% — 31%	54% — 46%

Polytechnics

Kenya	Malawi	Ghana
77% — 23%	87% — 13%	71% — 29%

Technical Programmes in Polytechnics

Kenya	Malawi	Ghana
86% — 14%	97% — 3%	99% — 1%
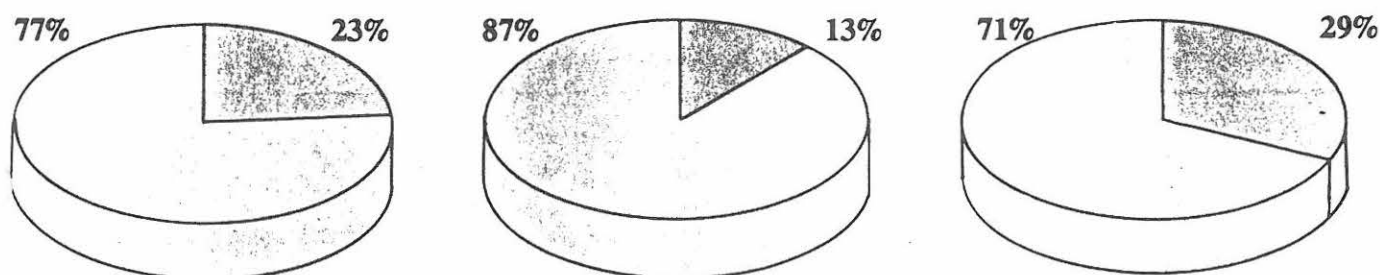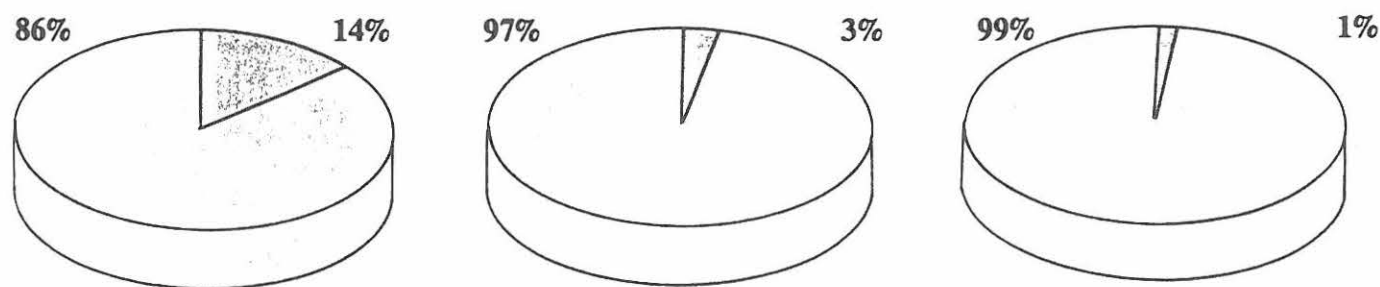
☐ Male   ▨ Female

Polytechnic student enrolment by institution, gender and programme type (1989)

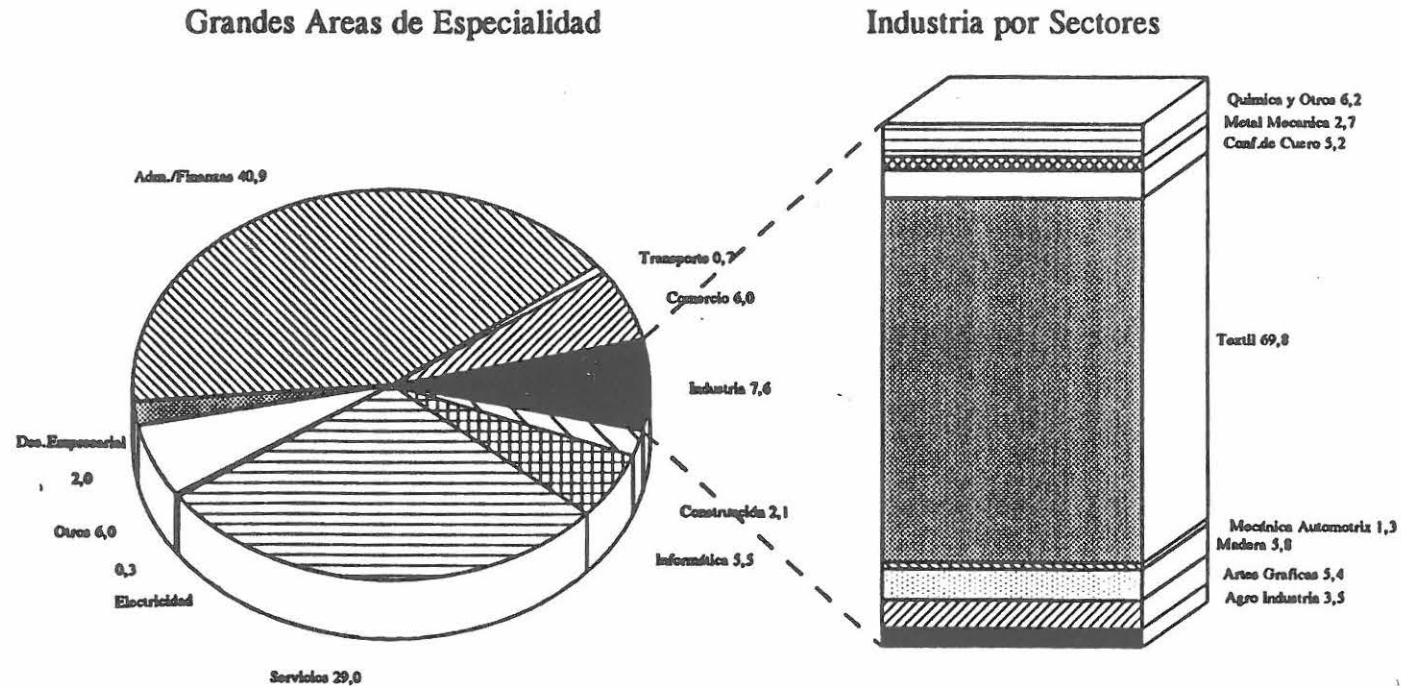| Region	Country	Institution	All Programmes				Technical Programmes		Non-Technical Program.	
			Males	Females	Total	% Female	Males	Females	Males	Females
Eastern	Tanzania	Dar-es-Salaam College	892	63	955	7	892	63 (7%)	(Not Offered)	
		MATI* Tumbi	99	28	127	22	99	28 (22%)	(Not Offered)	
		MATI* Nyegezi	216	17	233	7	216	17 (7%)	(Not Offered)	
		MATI Uyole	345	132	477	28	345	132 (28%)	(Not Offered)	
	Kenya	Kenya Polyt.	2660	828	3488	24	2179	448 (17%)	481	380 (44%)
		Eldoret Polyt.	306	78	384	20	220	16 (17%)	75	62 (45%)
	Uganda	Uganda Polytechnic	514	52	566	9	514	52 (9%)	(Not Offered)	
Southern	Botswana	Botswana Polytechnic	590	31	621	5	590	31 (5%)	(Not Offered)	
	Malawi	The Polytechnic	890	143	1033	14	645	19 (3%)	245	124 (34%)
		Lilongwe Technical College	176	19	195	10	172	2 (10%)	4	17 (81%)
	Zambia	Evelyn Hone College*	685	343	1028	33	497	148 (23%)	188	195 (51%)
		Northern Technical College	346	33	379	9	315	16 (5%)	21	27 (56%)
		Natural Resource College	487	8	495	2	487	8 (2%)	(Not	Offered)
Western	Nigeria	Yaba College of Technology	6413	2097	8510	25	3386	476 (12%)	3027	1621 (35%)
		Kwara State Polytechnic	5539	2478	8017	31	1077	198 (16%)	5539	2280 (29%)
		Calabar Polytechnic	2775	429	3204	13	720	111 (13%)	1251	318 (20%)
		Ogun State Polytechnic	1180	696	1876	27	299	132 (31%)	881	564 (39%)
	Ghana	Accra Polytechnic*	1741	757	2498	30	1075	8 (1%)	465	713 (61%)
		Takoradi Polytechnic	942	250	1192	21	628	7 (1%)	294	243 (45%)
	Gambia	Technical Training Institute	317	215	532	40	235	30 (11%)	82	185 (69%)
TOTAL			27113	8697	35810	24%	14591	1492 (12%)	12522	6755 (35%)

* Technical Courses are non engineering

Table 3

Matrícula Femenina Total de las IFP
por Area de Especialidad

Grandes Areas de Especialidad

Adm./Finanzas 40,9

Transporte 0,7
Comercio 6,0
Industria 7,6
Construcción 2,1
Informática 5,5

Des. Empresarial 2,0
Otros 6,0
0,3 Electricidad

Servicios 29,0

Industria por Sectores

Química y Otros 6,2
Metal Mecanica 2,7
Conf. de Cuero 5,2

Textil 69,8

Mecánica Automotriz 1,3
Madera 5,8
Artes Gráficas 5,4
Agro Industria 3,5

Fuente: Datos estadísticos relevados en
los informes nacionales

Table 4

Distribution of teching staff by gender in selected primary and secondary schools and polytechnics in the 3 Regions in 1988/1989

| Tanzania (Eastern) | Botswana (Southern) | Ghana (Western) |
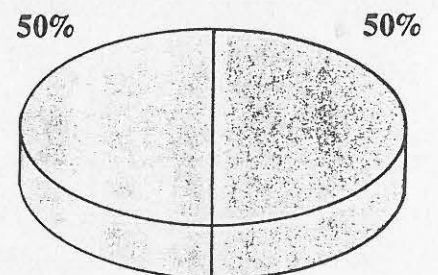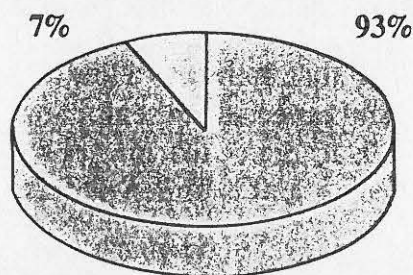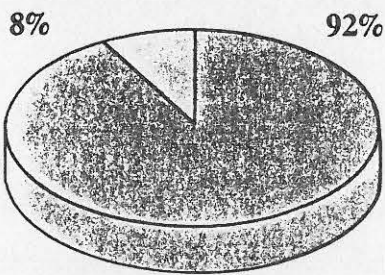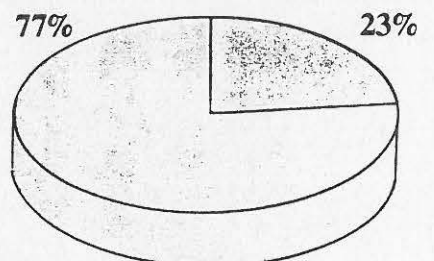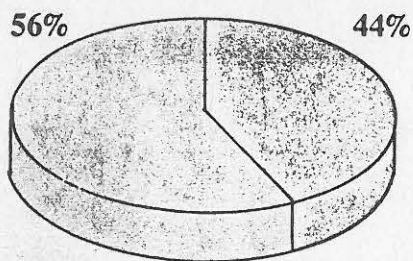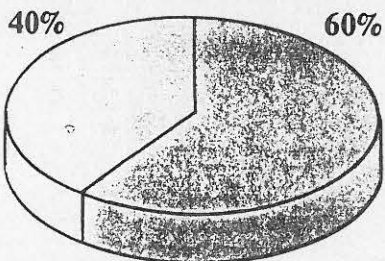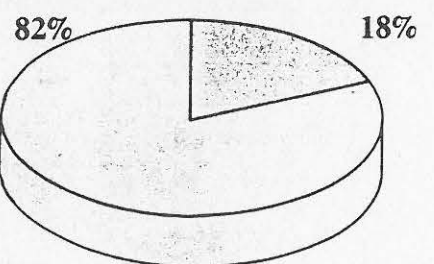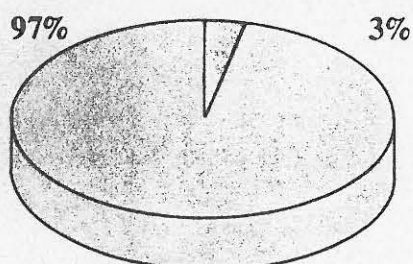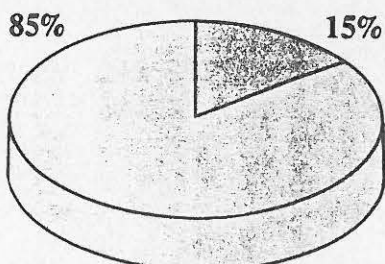
Primary level

| 8% | 92% | 7% | 93% | 50% | 50% |

Secondary level

| 40% | 60% | 56% | 44% | 77% | 23% |

Polytechnics

| 85% | 15% | 97% | 3% | 82% | 18% |

Technical Programmes in Polytechnics

| 90% | 10% | 100% | 0% | 99% | 1% |
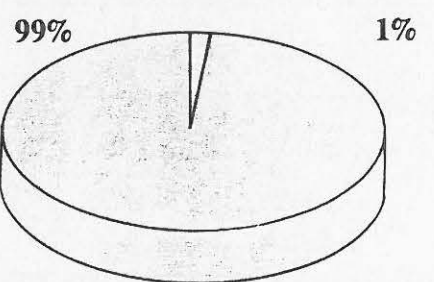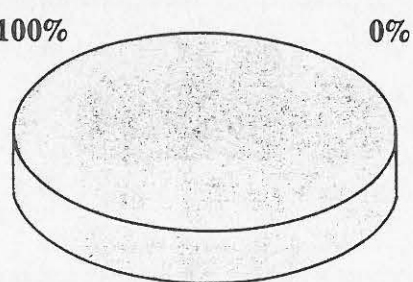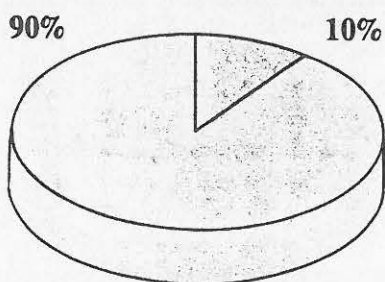
☐ Male   ☐ Female

United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference on Women
Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training
International Training Centre of the ILO
Turin (Italy)
10-14 October 1994

EXTRACTS ON EDUCATION FROM THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Extracts on Education from the
Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies
for the Advancement of Women

Education

Paragraph 163

Education is the basis for the full promotion and improvement of the status of women. It is the basic tool that should be given to women in order to fulfil their role as full members of society. Governments should strengthen the participation of women at all levels of national educational policy and in formulating and implementing plans, programmes and projects. Special measures should be adopted to revise and adapt women's education to the realities of the developing world. Existing and new services should be directed to women as intellectuals, policy-makers, decision-makers, planners, contributors and beneficiaries, with particular attention to the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960). Special measures should also be adopted to increase equal access to scientific, technical and vocational education, particularly for young women, and evaluate progress made by the poorest women in urban and rural areas.

Paragraph 164

Special measures should be taken by Governments and the international organizations, especially UNESCO, to eliminate the high rate of illiteracy by the year 2000, with the support of the international community. Governments should establish targets and adopt appropriate measures for this purpose. While the elimination of illiteracy is important to all, priority programmes are still required to overcome the special obstacles that have generally led to higher illiteracy rates among women than among men. Efforts should be made to promote functional literacy, with special emphasis on health, nutrition and viable economic skills and opportunities, in order to eradicate illiteracy among women and to produce additional material for the eradication of illiteracy. Programmes for legal literacy in low-income urban and rural areas should be initiated and intensified. Raising the level of education among women is important for the general welfare of society and because of its close link to child survival and child spacing.

Paragraph 165

The causes of high absenteeism and drop-out rates of girls in the educational system must be addressed. Measures must be developed, strengthened and implemented that will, inter alia, create the appropriate incentives to ensure that women have an equal opportunity to acquire education at all levels, as well as to apply their education in a work or career context. Such measures should include the strengthening of communication and information systems, the implementation of appropriate legislation and the reorientation of educational personnel. Moreover, Governments should encourage and finance adult education programmes for those women who have never completed their studies or were forced to interrupt their studies, owing to family responsibilities, lack of financial resources or early pregnancies.

Paragraph 166

Efforts should be made to ensure that available scholarships and other forms of support from governmental, non-governmental and private sources are expanded and equitably distributed to girls and boys and that boarding and lodging facilities are equally accessible to them.

Paragraph 167

The curricula of public and private schools should be examined, textbooks and other educational materials reviewed and educational personnel retrained in order to eliminate all discriminatory gender stereotyping in education. Educational institutions should be encouraged to expand their curricula to include studies on women's contribution to all aspects of development.

Paragraph 168

The Decade has witnessed the rise of centres and programmes of women's studies in response to social forces and to the need for developing a new scholarship and a body of knowledge on women's studies from the perspective of women. Women's studies should be developed to reformulate the current models influencing the constitution of knowledge and sustaining a value system that reinforces inequality. The promotion and application of women's studies inside and outside and conventional institutions of learning will help to create a just and equitable society in which men and women enjoy equal partnership.

Paragraph 169

Encouragement and incentives, as well as counselling services, should be provided for girls to study scientific, technical and managerial subjects at all levels, in order to develop and enhance the aptitudes of women for decision-making, management and leadership in these fields.

Paragraph 170

All educational and occupational training should be flexible and accessible to both women and men. It should aim to improve employment possibilities and promotion prospects for women including those areas where technologies are improving rapidly, and vocational training programmes, as well as workers' educational schemes dealing with co-operatives, trade unions and work associations, should stress the importance of equal opportunity for women at all levels of work and work-related activities.

Paragraph 171

Extensive measures should be taken to diversify women's vocational education and training in order to extend their opportunities for employment in occupations that are non-traditional or are new to women and that are important to development. The present educational system, which in many countries is sharply divided by sex, with girls receiving instruction in home economics and boys in technical subjects, should be altered. Existing vocational training centres should be opened to girls and women instead of continuing a segregated training system.

Paragraph 172

A fully integrated system of training, having direct linkages with employment needs, pertinent to future employment and development trends should be created and implemented in order to avoid wastage of human resources.

Paragraph 173

Educational programmes to enable men to assume as much responsibility as women in the upbringing of children and the maintenance of the household should be introduced at all levels of the educational system.

Commission on the Status of Women
Report of the thirty-eighth session
(7-18 March 1994)

DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

I. STATEMENT OF MISSION

1. The Platform for Action aims to accelerate the removal of the remaining obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life, including economic and political decision-making; to protect women's human rights throughout the life cycle, and to mainstream women in all areas of sustainable development so that men and women can work together for equality, development and peace. For this purpose, the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are called upon to undertake strategic action to implement the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women in critical areas of concern.

II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2. Since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in 1985, the world has been experiencing a global process of restructuring of political, economic, social and cultural relationships. This restructuring process has had a profound impact, both positive and negative, on women, and forms the backdrop for this Platform for Action.

3. Changes in political relationships have reduced the threat of global conflict and increased the importance of multilateral solutions to political problems. While the threat of global conflict has been reduced, a resurgence of nationalism and ethnic conflict have threatened the peace in many areas. They have also led to the expansion of the role of the United Nations in humanitarian assistance and peace-keeping.

4. The move towards democratization has been coupled with a renewed emphasis on the implementation of universal human rights. The recognition by the World Conference on Human Rights that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights has meant that the full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community. However, much remains to be done nationally and internationally to monitor and enforce women's human rights.

5.   Economic relationships are also changing. The prolonged global economic
recession has led to a restructuring of the economic relationships between
countries and, in some regions, a decline in national as well as personal income
and well-being. It has been accompanied by a growing reliance on market
economies. The role of transnational corporations has increased. New areas of
economic growth have emerged, especially in areas related to new technologies in
information, health and related services. Global patterns of employment have
been changing and women have begun to form the labour force in new growth
sectors in all regions. At the same time, the capacity to provide services and
make long-term investments through the public sector has been reduced, and
poverty, both absolute and relative, has increased, accompanied by widespread
migration of both women and men in search of employment.

6.   Evidence of accelerating depletion of natural resources and other
environmental problems has resulted in a global consensus on the need to see
development in terms of sustainability over the long term. The United Nations
Conference on Environment and Development identified women as key actors in the
management and protection of natural resources, particularly in rural areas.

7.   There has been renewed attention to human development seen in terms of the
life cycle of the individual, progressing from childhood and youth through old
age, and people's needs at different stages should be taken into account in
policies and planning. There is a recognition that the generations are
interdependent, that the youth of today will be the ageing of tomorrow and that
the older generation transmits enduring values to the new generation.

8.   As societies are being transformed, so too are the relationships between
women and men. Differences between women's and men's achievements and
participation are recognized as the result of socially constructed gender roles
rather than biological differences. The sexual division of labour between
productive roles and reproductive roles has become increasingly blurred as women
have entered the workplace in growing numbers and their productive contribution
in other spheres has received greater recognition, and as men have taken greater
responsibility for domestic tasks, including the care of children. A focus on
gender roles rather than on women alone is needed to emphasize the evolving
partnership between men and women in a changing world.

9.   Notably, despite common problems, the world is not homogeneous, and there
are regional and national differences. But these differences are often a matter
of degree rather than essence, a matter of resources and capacity available for
solution rather than characteristic of the problems to be solved. Women are not
a homogeneous group and there are differences among women with different life
experiences. Young women, ageing women, disabled, migrant, refugee or displaced
women all have special concerns. However, they also share many of the same
concerns derived from their gender. As a result, both the diversity and the
commonality of women's experience, knowledge, vision and hopes constitute a
source of strength and the basis for believing that the mission of this Platform
for Action can be achieved.

III.   CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

10.   The text proposed by the Secretary-General constituted a good starting
point. The discussion during the thirty-eighth session of the Commission
provided an opportunity to expand the text, ensure inclusion of priority
concerns and deepen the analysis. The discussion resulted in a number of
proposed changes.

-32-

11. The section should begin with a preambular paragraph that would note the interdependence of the critical areas of concern, their relationship with the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and the fact that the order of presentation reflects the concerns of women, but that all are of equal priority. The order of the presentation of the critical areas of concern should be modified.

12. There should be a clear correspondence between the strategic objectives and the critical areas of concern, both in terms of sequence in the text and aspects addressed. Use should be made of the indicators designed for use by national reports in the narratives of critical areas of concern to show the empirical basis for the concerns and to indicate the dimensions of the problems to be addressed.

13. The text on poverty should reflect the relationship of the concern with structural adjustment policies and programmes and with rural women. The text on violence against women should draw on the results of the expert group meeting on measures to eradicate violence against women presented to the Commission at its thirty-eighth session and should also make appropriate reference to violence deriving from terrorism and extremist religious views. The titles of the sections on mass media and mechanisms should be modified to reflect suggestions made during the discussion. Detailed suggestions made during the discussion should be reflected in the revised text to be presented to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session.

A. The persistent and growing burden of poverty on women

14. The heavy burdens of poverty generally fall disproportionately on women because women are less likely to have sufficient access to the economic and other resources necessary to improve their lives. The number of rural women living in absolute poverty is increasing at a faster rate than for men and the proportion of women among the poor is growing in all societies.

15. There has been little progress in eradicating the worst forms of poverty over the past 10 years. The effects of prolonged global economic recession, combined with adjustment programmes that have undermined the capacity of Governments to provide for the basic needs of their populations, have also undermined anti-poverty initiatives. This situation, coupled with civil strife in many parts of the world, has resulted in an overall increase in the proportion of households living in poverty and in the number of people in absolute poverty.

16. Poverty affects households as a whole, but within them women bear a disproportionate share of the burden. Women experience poverty differently from men because of differences in their entitlement and responsibility. Women must manage household consumption under situations of increasing scarcity or obtain remunerated employment in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector, and, in so doing, they make the invisible adjustment necessary to cope with poverty.

17. There has been a significant increase in the number of female-headed households, the majority of which are poor, with dependants young and old. Lacking education, health and other support services, and not having access to economic resources, these poor women confront significant obstacles to improving their situation. If they are unable to emerge from poverty, the cycle tends to be perpetuated through their children. In the absence of programmes to

attenuate the effects of poverty, these families are likely to remain among the poorest of the poor.

18. Experience has shown that public policies and private initiatives that take account of women's skills and potential by providing the resources and opportunities they need to bring themselves out of poverty can help provide a basis for national economic growth with equity.

B. Inequality in access to education, health and related services and means of maximizing the use of women's capacities

19. Education is a key to development, but despite this the educational opportunities offered to women have often contributed to reinforcing traditional female roles, denying them full partnership in society. There is growing awareness that educating women has a major impact on social change and is a worthwhile investment. Such education must be responsive to the practical needs of women and include training in science and technology and modern communications. Education is a necessary tool for women to continue to be agents of change.

20. In most regions of the world, girls and boys now have the same access to primary and secondary education and, in some regions, equality in enrolment is being achieved in tertiary education. Despite this, almost a billion people, two thirds of them women, are still illiterate and the benefits of more equal access to education will not be felt for some time. In other regions, girls still suffer discrimination in access to education and training and reductions in spending on education and health services as a result of structural adjustment.

21. For girls entering school, the fundamental question is whether they will receive quality education that will prepare them to enter any field, expose them to science and technology, stimulate their creativity, and build up their self-esteem, and that is structured to keep them from dropping out prematurely. For adult women, the challenge is to provide education and training that is cost-effective and can help them overcome the consequences of past discrimination which often left them lacking in essential skills. Experience in many countries has shown that investment in education of women and girls pays significant dividends in economic growth, improved health and quality of life for women and men alike.

22. Progress has also been made in making primary health care available, and new technologies make the prevention and treatment of many medical problems more feasible than ever before. However, reductions in spending on health services as a result of structural adjustment has halted progress in providing needed services in many countries. Lack of treatment of health problems primarily affecting women place women as a group at risk. When combined with lack of family-planning and other health-related services, the inadequate situation is reflected in high rates of maternal mortality, malnutrition, anaemia and too early and too frequent pregnancies.

23. To this is added the scourge of HIV/AIDS, which is affecting women at an increasing rate along with newborns. Women are often not able to insist on safe sex practices and have little access to information on prevention. The consequences of HIV/AIDS reach beyond women's health to their role as caretakers of the sick and destitute. The social, developmental and health consequences of

AIDS need to be seen through a gender perspective, but this is not always the case.

24. Society has much to gain from investments in education, health, family planning and child- and dependant-care services, for they are investments in the future of both women and men. Experience has shown that when such services are available, women are able to contribute their creativity and skills to the public good.

C. Violence against women

25. Violence against women is a global problem. It takes various forms in both public and private life, and has been recognized as a violation of basic human rights, instilling fear and insecurity in women's lives.

26. Violence against women derives essentially from the lower status accorded to women in the family and in society. Physical, psychological or sexual violence, whether occurring in the home or in society, is linked to male power, privilege and control. It is abetted by ignorance, lack of laws to prohibit violence, inadequate efforts by public authorities to enforce existing laws, and absence of educational and other means to address its causes. The absence of adequate statistics about incidence make elaboration of programmes and monitoring of changes difficult.

27. Violence against women has entered public debate and is now condemned as a violation of the human rights of women. It is a growing concern of men and women alike and has been condemned internationally in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in general recommendations 12 and 19 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and by other international bodies.

28. Experience in a number of countries shows that women and men can be mobilized to fight against violence in all its forms and that effective public measures can be taken to address both the consequences and the causes of violence.

D. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women

29. Women seldom perpetrate national and international armed and other kinds of conflict, and are almost never involved in the decisions leading to such conflict. Nevertheless, they bear a disproportionate share of the consequences of these conflicts, and conflict resolution at this level has remained largely a male domain.

30. Everyone caught up in armed conflicts is affected, but women are affected in particular ways, largely as a reflection of their status in society. They are seldom combatants themselves, lack protection and are often left with the responsibility of maintaining families when conflict disrupts or destroys social and economic life. They have been victims of such practices as torture, disappearance and systematic rape as a weapon of war. Women are disproportionately represented, with their children, among refugees and displaced persons. They are subject to violence or threats of violence or sexual abuse.

31. There is little evidence to confirm whether women in leadership positions would act differently from men in initiating conflict, but there is considerable evidence that women have different approaches to resolving conflict which can be brought to bear both nationally and internationally.

E. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself

32. Women lack equal access to, and control over, land, capital, technology and other means of production owing to the predominant division of labour between men and women in most societies. Consequently, women have been largely excluded from the shaping of economic structures and policies. At the same time, women's labour, which has contributed significantly to economic development, has generally been underpaid, undervalued and unrecognized.

33. Women have always contributed to national economies. They are the primary producers of food, constitute an increasing proportion of the economically active population, provide the skilled labour for economic sectors showing the fastest growth, and are increasingly the owners and managers of small and medium-sized enterprises.

34. However, women are infrequently part of the process of decision-making about economic structures and policies, either nationally or internationally, and are not well-represented in financial and other key economic institutions. In large enterprises, whether public or private, they are largely absent at management levels. Women tend to be segregated in a limited number of occupations, where pay is lower than for equivalent work by men. The value of their unremunerated contribution to the economy, whether in family enterprises or in domestic work, is unrecognized and not reflected in national accounts.

35. In most of the world, business has been considered a male preserve, reinforced by stereotypes and discriminatory practices. Women have lacked access to critical economic factors such as ownership of land, credit and training in technology. Women's opportunities have been limited by discriminatory laws, inadequate education and training, inadequate sharing of domestic responsibilities, including child care, and inflexible working environments. The skills women have obtained as a result of their experience in household management, working in the informal sector and in the community has not been valued. Women doing remunerated work have largely been relegated to low-paying, low-prestige jobs and to the unregulated informal sector where exploitation is often easy.

36. Experience has shown that when women are given access to credit they apply it effectively. Given access to resources, technology and training, women can take the lead in expanding production. Women's skills at performing many tasks simultaneously, their discipline and their ability to adjust to new situations constitute a major underutilized resource for development which can be released if economic structures and policies can be made responsive to them.

F. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels

37. More women are serving as heads of State or Government, ministers, members of parliament, mayors and members of city councils than ever before. Yet, women still lack equal access to power structures that shape society. In a period of increasing democratization, women make up at least half of the voters in almost all countries, and have had the right to vote and hold office for more than a generation. Yet, they are not full participants in the public choices that affect their lives. All but a few countries are far from achieving the target set by the Economic and Social Council of 30 per cent women in decision-making levels by 1995. Nor do women participate fully in the leadership of international organizations, as top-level diplomats, in transnational corporations and banks, in the military, the police or in peace-keeping. Yet, without women's full participation, democracy cannot be achieved or maintained. Experience has shown that women can make a difference by casting their votes and affecting the outcomes of electoral processes for change.

38. The continuing gap between women's _de jure_ equality and the reality of women's lives and exclusion from power comes from many sources, and societies differ greatly. For example, in most countries, the norms and practices of political activity suit male lifestyles more than women's. Women often have had little opportunity to compete fairly for leadership positions. Negative stereotypes have discouraged some women from such roles.

39. Inequality in the public arena is often matched by, and often starts with, inequality within the household. Yet, in some societies there have been gains in domestic partnership and role-sharing. Experience has shown that measures can be taken to increase power-sharing in the home, where children first witness gender relations.

G. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women

40. Effective mechanisms are needed at the international, regional, national and community levels to serve as catalysts for promoting the advancement of women. In most countries, the mechanisms established do not have the capacity in terms of financial and human resources to perform this function successfully.

41. National machineries for the advancement of women have been created in almost every country of the world. Diverse in form, they provide a tool for the advancement of women through advocacy, monitoring of public policies and mobilizing support. Women's organizations, including grass-roots women's groups, professional associations, women's networks and other non-governmental organizations, have demonstrated success in effectively and forcefully mobilizing women, especially at the community level, in both rural and urban areas.

42. While there has been an improvement in the development and use of statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex, their coverage is by no means complete. The availability of this information can provide the base for compelling analysis of gender aspects, leading to action.

43. However, these national machineries are often marginalized in national government structures; they are understaffed and under-funded, and are often unable to mobilize the information and clout necessary for advocacy and

monitoring, or for linking with grass-roots organizations. At the international level, mechanisms to promote the advancement of women, as part of mainstream political, developmental or human rights activities, experience the same problems as national machineries.

44. Without strong and powerful women's institutions at all levels, mainstreaming women's concerns in public policies and programmes will be ineffective. Without sources of information about the gender-specific impacts of public actions, programmes are weakened. Without a focus for mobilizing the efforts of grass-roots organizations, their efforts can be dissipated.

45. Experience in many countries shows that strong national machinery, complemented by institutions at the community level, can accelerate the process of change for women. The existence of strong and active women's organizations provides a basis for reaching out from international, national and community levels to mobilize women for change.

H. Lack of awareness of, and commitment to, internationally and nationally recognized women's human rights

46. International standards to prevent discrimination against women are in place. The World Conference on Human Rights emphasized that women's rights were an integral part of the mainstream of universal, inalienable and indivisible human rights. However, unless these standards are fully applied, interpreted and enforced in civil, penal and commercial codes and administrative rules and regulations, they will exist only in name. Lack of awareness, as well as means for enjoyment, of these rights are critical obstacles.

47. Recognition of women's human rights is reflected in the fact that over two thirds of the world's States are party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including all of the countries in some regions. Indeed, in most countries, steps have been taken to reflect these rights in law. Women are increasingly using the legal system to exercise these rights.

48. However, in the countries that have not become party to the Convention or where serious reservations have been entered, or where national laws have not been changed to conform with international norms, women's de jure equality is not yet secured. In other countries, lack of enforcement of civil, penal and commercial codes or administrative rules and regulations means that the enjoyment of women of their rights is far less than that of men.

49. The gap between having rights and enjoying them derives in part from a lack of knowledge by women and men alike about those rights and a lack of commitment by Governments to enforce them. It also results from unresponsive legal systems, overly complex administrative procedures, insensitive judicial personnel and inadequate monitoring of the violation of the human rights of women. There is a lack of appropriate recourse mechanisms at the national and international levels. Inadequate resources for institutions monitoring the violation of the human rights of women at the international level, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, compounds the problem.

50. Experience in many countries has shown that women can be mobilized around the struggle to enjoy their rights, regardless of level of education or socio-economic status. Legal literacy programmes have been shown to be

effective in helping women understand the link between their rights and other aspects of their lives and in demonstrating that cost-effective institutions can be created to help women obtain those rights.

I. Insufficient use of mass media to promote women's positive contributions to society

51. The world is undergoing a communications revolution in which new images and ideas reach into the far corners of the world. New technologies offer the promise of greater interaction among people. These technologies are powerful tools that can be used either for social progress or to reinforce stereotypes.

52. In many countries, the public image of women is changing because of the positive images of women being projected. There are also increasing numbers of women involved in the communications media.

53. On the whole, however, the mass media in most countries still rely on stereotyped images of women and do not provide an accurate picture of women's roles and value in a changing world, but reinforce outdated perceptions of women's roles. Whether public or private, the mass media are still controlled primarily by men and reflect, in many ways, their values and perceptions. These include images of violence and dominance, which have an impact on viewers young and old.

54. Experience in some countries in which efforts have been made to portray women's contributions accurately shows that the mass media can be a significant force for reinforcing change and promoting equality. The possibilities of using communications technology to link women nationally and internationally have been demonstrated in a number of pilot efforts.

J. Lack of adequate recognition and support for women's contribution to managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment

55. Managing natural resources and safeguarding the environment are the responsibilities of everyone, and the consequences of environmental degradation affect everyone as well. Women's deep concern for the quality and sustainability of the natural systems that sustain life is an intimate part of women's lives. This concern takes root in their daily reality, their experience as persons primarily responsible for obtaining fuel and water in much of the world and their role in managing the consumption patterns of the household. It also takes root in their concern for the future generations they bear.

56. The preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development showed that women were concerned with the environment and had unique experiences that could help develop national and international programmes and policies. This has been reflected in Agenda 21.

57. However, women have been largely absent from decision-making about the environment. The enthusiasm and experience brought by women has not been applied to environmental decision-making and management.

58. In a world of accelerating resource depletion which results in diminished agricultural production, desertification and dislocation, the expertise and knowledge of all is required. Despite the close interaction between the

environment and women's daily lives, environmental policies typically have not been formulated with this in mind and technical solutions that have been proposed have not taken this perspective into account. As a result, women have tended to suffer the effects of environmental degradation rather than enabled to bring their perspectives and experience to bear to protect natural resources.

59. Experience in many countries has shown that when women have been involved in environmental management, protection and conservation, they can be a decisive factor in the success of programmes and initiatives.

IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DERIVED FROM THE CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN

60. The critical areas of concern cut across the boundaries of equality, development and peace. They reflect the interdependence of these goals, which were set out for the United Nations Decade for Women. The strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken are also cross-cutting. The themes of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace require efforts to address both the practical and the strategic needs of women. Action may be taken by the international community, Governments, non-governmental organizations, other community organizations, the private sector and individuals.

General comments

61. The strategic objectives and action to be taken should be expressed in clear, direct and forceful language. Actions should be expressed by use of the infinitive. An effort should be made to develop a more evocative, concise format for the actions, including the use of devices such as bullet points and through logical organization of the text. The Platform for Action should provide a new approach to presenting United Nations consensus accessible to all.

62. There should be a clear correspondence between the strategic objectives and the critical areas of concern, both in terms of sequence in the text and aspects addressed. In order to match the order agreed for the critical areas of concern, the strategic objectives should follow the same order. It was noted that strategic objectives I, J and K were instrumental rather than substantive. Objective K should be integrated into all of the other objectives and not be shown separately.

63. The strategic objectives and actions should reflect throughout a life-cycle approach to women that can reflect concerns at different stages of life, from childhood and youth through ageing. They should be drafted with clear, achievable and measurable targets. Actions to affect the girl child should be found throughout. Institutions responsible for specific actions should be identified as well as the role of international cooperation, including multilateral and bilateral donors and the international community in general.

64. A concise introduction to chapter IV should be maintained, as in document E/CN.6/1994/10, which should highlight the interdependence of strategic objectives and actions, their relationship with the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, and the fact that the order of presentation reflects the concerns of women, but that all are of equal priority. The introduction should also pay tribute to the role of the women's movement in initiating and maintaining action. It should include some overall elements, such as gender planning, different methods of action, systematic monitoring and

evaluation, using both quantitative and qualitative indicators, and an emphasis on women as key actors, with an appropriate emphasis on the role of men.

65. In preparing the section on strategic objectives and actions, use should be made of suggestions provided by Member States, by intergovernmental bodies, by organizations of the United Nations system and by non-governmental organizations, as well as the observations made during the thirty-eighth session. The actions should also take account of the results of regional conferences, as well as of the International Conference on Population and Development and the preparations for the World Summit for Social Development.

A. Enable women to overcome poverty

66. Actions that address women's economic self-reliance and access to quality education and to health services will also help to eliminate the factors that accentuate poverty. Given appropriate resources and structural support, women can themselves overcome poverty. However, poverty is different in degree and in solution in developed and developing countries, between urban and rural areas and for specific groups of women. Actions should be designed to take into account these differences. Women should be incorporated in the design and implementation of poverty alleviation policies and programmes. A target of a 50 per cent reduction in the population in extreme poverty by the year 2000 should be aimed at.

Develop gender-sensitive national and international economic policies

67. International financial institutions, Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations should assess the poverty and gender implications of current macroeconomic policies, including structural adjustment programmes, especially those that have a direct impact on women in poverty. National and international financial institutions should study their effects on the poor and develop gender-sensitive policies, appraisal and approval procedures and monitoring, in particular programmes aiming at the achievement of a sustainable livelihood for poor rural and urban women in developing countries. Governments should prioritize efforts and take further concrete steps to quantify and value the contribution of women's unpaid work in agriculture, food production, reproduction and household labour and to reflect the value of these contributions in the gross national product and other economic statistics, defining the unpaid worker as a worker in the System of National Accounts.

Target policies and programmes to poor women

68. Programmes to provide access to productive resources should be designed to provide poor women with economic opportunities. Governments should give increased priority to investments in education and training, including the eradication of illiteracy, as well as to investment in health services, including reproductive health and family planning, in areas where poor women live and work. Special efforts should be made to reach the girl child. Child and dependant care and other social support facilities should be made available through action by Governments and non-governmental organizations. Alternative women-friendly credit systems should be introduced, together with methods of control on household resources, food security and adequate housing; self-help organizations should be promoted and female-headed households assisted. Assistance should be provided, of both a specific and a multisectoral character, by the international community as well as by national sources.

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<u>Help rural women to overcome poverty</u>

69. Rural women in particular should be provided equal access to productive
resources through ensuring legal equality in access to land and other productive
resources and through the development of programmes to provide credit and
extension. Affirmative actions, specific programmes and the inclusion of poor
rural women in the definition of policies for poverty alleviation should orient
any action. These could include review of the effects on poor rural women of
any policy; mutual actions between Governments and non-governmental
organizations; provision of adequate human and financial resources; training,
including in new fields; sensitization through the media about their situation
and increase in United Nations assistance to rural women.

<u>Address the needs of women migrant workers and displaced women</u>

70. Migrant and displaced women are both extremely economically vulnerable
groups with specific needs and mechanisms for solution. Therefore, actions on
poverty should also include measures to improve their situation. In the
receiving countries, measures should be taken to provide them with legal
protection of their rights as workers.

> B. <u>Ensure women's access to quality education and training for
> self-reliance at all levels and in all fields and sectors</u>

71. A substantial quantitative and qualitative improvement in the education of
girls and women needs to be made to achieve equality as one of the major
priorities arising from the Conference, and resources need to be committed for
this purpose. The international community should, in partnership, forcefully
address the gender disparities and develop gender-sensitive education and
training. Relevant non-governmental organizations, organizations of the United
Nations system and other national, regional and interregional bodies should
assist Governments in the establishment and implementation of a broad approach
to the education of girls and women in the context of overall development
strategies in full recognition of the benefits to society of investment in
women's education.

<u>Achieve education for all</u>

72. Top priority should be given to removing gender disparities from national
policies and programmes for universal primary, secondary and higher education
and adult literacy. The existing gap in education between developing and
developed countries has to be removed. The necessary expenditure should be
allocated and affirmative actions defined to achieve equality in enrolment and
educational achievements and prevent drop-outs of girls from formal schooling.
Incentives should be given to families to minimize the opportunity cost of
girls' education on families through such means as free textbooks, scholarships
for girls, flexible school schedules, and child-care systems for young siblings.
Action to promote mutual sharing of girls' workload in the household and to
delay marriage and avoid early pregnancy would also prevent drop-outs of girls.
This would create a learning environment which could retain girls in schooling
when equality in enrolment is not achieved. In accordance with the Jomtien
Declaration on Education for All, the gender gap in basic and functional
literacy should be eliminated by the year 2000 and the disparities in literacy
between developed and developing countries narrowed. Literacy programmes based
on the social context and basic needs of the learners should be provided.

Prepare women for the twenty-first century

73. Measures should be taken to encourage women and girls to enter new fields of studies which offer different job opportunities and career perspectives. Human resource development should draw on the untapped talents and potentials of women. Vocational guidance and counselling services in secondary, vocational and higher-level education should be strengthened, including innovative strategies such as use of role models, in order to encourage girls and women to enter and remain in new fields, notably scientific and technical education, and to be retained in them. Flexible educational provisions must be established in order to reach remote areas or special groups. Life-long training should be promoted to allow women to re-enter the labour market after interruptions for caring responsibilities. Action should be taken to increase women's participation at decision-making levels in education.

Make education gender-sensitive

74. Action should focus on the elimination of social stereotypes from curricula, textbooks and teacher training and on materials that present the positive role and contribution of women in order to enhance the empowerment and self-reliance of girls and women and ensure a gender-sensitive educational environment. This would also promote women's role in public life and eliminate violence against women. At the community level, parents' organizations and non-governmental organizations should play an active supporting role. Research by and on women must be encouraged and supported, in the areas of both human and natural sciences. Components on legal literacy and information on human rights should be incorporated in the curricula, as well as on reproductive health and rights and sustainable development.

> **C. Increase women's full access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care and related services**

75. Adequate financing must be provided to ensure availability of primary health services to all that respond to women's specific health needs in all stages of the life cycle. There is a joint responsibility of women and men for the next generation. The targets set for health for all in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade should be achieved.

Deliver affordable and accessible health care for all

76. A comprehensive, integrated model of health services for women should be applied, adequately funded and available to all at affordable cost. It should emphasize health promotion and disease prevention, including prevention of disabilities, utilization of traditional medicine and establishment of care systems for the elderly. There should be support for gender-sensitive research and training for health workers and greater participation and effective representation of women, especially female health-care workers, in planning and programme delivery, including training of women doctors and health technicians. Service delivery should emphasize quality-related aspects. Traditional health knowledge should be used and respected. International financial institutions should take steps to assist Governments to deliver these health services by instituting policies favourable to public investment in health. Efforts should be made to combat HIV/AIDS through a recognition of gender factors and its specific and growing impact on women.

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Promote reproductive health and rights

77. The target of reducing infant and maternal mortality by one half, especially reducing the gap between developed and developing countries, should be met. Reproductive health and family-planning programmes, including education and awareness-raising about reproductive rights as human rights and about harmful practices, should be adequately funded and staffed, designed to help individuals and couples to meet their needs and accessible to all, aiming also at reducing early pregnancies and their effects on women. Programmes should target men as fathers and as persons responsible for their sexual behaviour. There should be training in health and family-planning programmes, with participation of midwives and community-trained female health workers.

Foster research on women's health

78. Research on prevention, treatment, and health-care systems for diseases and conditions that affect women and girls differently, including drugs and medical technology, should be encouraged and supported. Specific needs related to old age should systematically be incorporated in research, training and service delivery, since women tend to be a majority in that age group and the burden of caring for that age group also rests with women.

D. Eliminate violence against women

79. Strategic action should address all of the manifestations of violence set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which are physical and psychological, including sexual violence occurring in the family, in the workplace or within the general community. Violence against women should be recognized as a violation of women's human rights. Various actions should be taken by Governments, non-governmental organizations and the international community in their respective areas of authority and competence. Governments should cooperate with the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and support her in the fulfilment of her mandate.

Address the root causes of violence against women

80. Gender-based violence is inextricably linked to male power, privilege and control. It is important to continue to study and widely publicize the root causes and mechanisms of the different forms of violence, including their relation to the balance of power between men and women in general as well as between individual men and women. Emphasis should be given to understanding the basis of sexual abuse, violence against the girl child, and against women migrant workers, sexual harassment and trafficking in women, in the context of social, economic and political conditions, including violence committed against women by extremists, including religious extremists. The study should examine the roots of violence in the social-cultural environment, and the impact of the mass media, including commercial advertisements, on violence against women. Studies should also address the cycle of violence and how violence is repeated through generations. Violence against women should be shown as an issue of gender inequality and human rights requiring improvement of the status of women and their empowerment. Governments should further combat the root causes of violence by adopting measures, including developing and conducting community education campaigns to promote non-violent attitudes and the unacceptability of violence against women, analysing and reviewing existing legislation relevant to violence against women, and where such legislation does not exist, introducing such legislation in consultation with non-governmental organizations and

relevant government mechanisms. Non-governmental organizations should continue campaigns to eliminate violence against women.

Take integrated measures to eradicate violence against women

81. Violence against women is a crime and should be punished as such. Action to eradicate violence against women should be comprehensive and address both the causes and the consequences and use both legal and social measures along the lines set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Governments should develop legislation at the national level in accordance with the Declaration. Emphasis should be placed on preventing violence, as well as on protecting women subject to violence, prosecuting offenders and rehabilitating victims and perpetrators. Legal literacy programmes and information campaigns on existing laws for the protection of women targets of violence need to be carried out to make women and men aware of women's human rights. The education system should include curricular material showing the links between gender inequality and violence against women and that violence against women is not legitimate but rather criminal behaviour. The mass media should be enlisted to carry this message. Education and orientation should be targeted to men and should emphasize the importance of mutual respect between men and women. Security measures such as provision of shelters are to be provided to women subject to violence, as well as relief through medical and psychological counselling services. The judiciary and the police forces should be trained to ensure fair treatment of women targets of violence. Governments should sponsor programmes to enhance sensitivity among legal and health professionals, including counsellors, to understand the nature and dynamics of violence against women so as to ensure that women receive fair treatment and their safety is prioritized. Increased recruitment of women into the police forces and redressing the underrepresentation of women within the judiciary should be sought. Legal and social assistance should be provided to women subject to violence and their access to justice facilitated. New approaches to sanctioning offenders, including therapeutic intervention, should be developed. Governments should consider the setting-up of high-level independent, statutory bodies to oversee the working of safeguards for women, including the state enforcement machinery.

Adopt special measures to eliminate trafficking in women and to assist women targets of violence in specific situations

82. Special measures should be taken to eradicate violence against women, particularly in vulnerable situations such as women with disabilities and women migrant workers. Both sending and receiving countries of migrants should enforce existing legislation for women migrant workers. Specific action should be taken to protect women and girls who are subject to sex trafficking and forced prostitution and to prevent further abuse, including the dismantling of international networks in trafficking. Special measures for medical and psychological care of those women should be designed. Coordination of action between Governments and non-governmental organizations should be achieved.

E. Increase the participation of women in conflict resolution and protect women in armed and other kinds of conflict and under foreign occupation

83. The participation of women in conflict resolution is their right and their experience is valuable. Actions to increase the participation of women in conflict resolution are linked closely with those proposed under the strategic

objective to promote full participation of women in power structures and the objective to eliminate violence against women. Violence directed against women in international armed and other kinds of conflict is a war crime and a violation of international human rights law. Action should include redirecting possible savings from defense budgets to development, including through the promotion of disarmament programmes.

Bring more women into the peace process

84. More women at all levels should become involved in peace and conflict resolution. Countries and the United Nations should aim at a target of gender parity in peace negotiation and conflict resolution and take steps to provide women and men with training in this area. Measures should be taken to bring women into peace-keeping, in both civilian and military roles. Measures should be taken to reinforce women's roles as peace educators, both in the family and in society.

Support women affected by armed conflict and foreign occupation

85. Grave violations of the human rights of women in specific armed conflict, including acts of terrorism and foreign occupation, especially in the form of genocide and "ethnic cleansing", which include in particular murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy, creating a mass exodus of refugees and displaced persons, should be considered violations of the fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law and swiftly condemned and punished. Countries and all parties to armed conflicts should strictly observe international humanitarian law, as set forth in the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and other principles of international law, as well as the minimum standards for the protection of human rights as laid down in international conventions. Efforts should be made to identify these situations rapidly, publicize them and immediately arrange impartial investigations leading to the prosecution of perpetrators. The Special Rapporteur and other human rights mechanisms should be used for this purpose. Awareness campaigns regarding violence against women in armed conflict and under foreign occupation should be launched and assistance provided to the victims of these violations. International measures to address armed conflict and foreign occupation, such as economic sanctions, should be designed to limit their impact on women and children. During rehabilitation and reconstruction following conflicts, the role of women should be recognized and planning should include a gender dimension. Programmes to assist women who have become disabled or must care for disabled persons should be developed.

Guarantee assistance to refugee and displaced women

86. Special attention should be given to refugee and displaced women in accordance with the guidelines and conclusions established by the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Governments should ensure equal rights and access of women and men to refugee determination procedures and the grant of asylum. Governments should consider gender factors in recognizing as refugees women whose claim to refugee status is based on a well-founded fear of persecution, through violence, for reasons enumerated in the 1951 Geneva Convention and the related 1967 Protocol. Special training should be given to law enforcement officers and members of military forces to prevent violence against refugee and displaced women and to promote respect of their rights.

F. **Promote women's economic self-reliance, including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources - land, capital and technology**

87. Actions should be taken to provide women with the same access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources as men. These actions should be seen in terms of other strategic objectives, including eliminating factors that accentuate poverty and strengthening factors that promote the full participation of women. They should involve a combination of actions by Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, supported by the international community. A gender approach should be followed in the definition, implementation and monitoring of policies at the national, regional and international levels, and in the design, implementation and monitoring of international cooperation.

Secure economic rights for women

88. Governments and private sector institutions should eliminate all laws and regulations that discriminate against women in economic activities, especially those that discriminate against rural women, women in the informal sector and self-employed, in their access to economic resources. Measures should also be taken to guarantee protection against discrimination and provide the right of petition for discrimination, including implementation of ILO Convention No. 156 on workers with family responsibilities, and special efforts made to protect the rights of women migrant workers. Non-governmental organizations and national machinery for the advancement of women should cooperate to facilitate public education and awareness, monitor progress and initiate legislative provisions for enforcement of women's rights.

Take positive action to give women access to resources, employment and appropriate working conditions, market and trade

89. Positive actions should be taken to overcome barriers to access to economic resources, such as targeting women in employment programmes, providing guarantee loans for women entrepreneurs, especially in rural areas, introducing programmes and training courses in non-traditional areas of work, revaluing women's traditional work and work in the informal sector by improving training in these sectors and recognizing them in national accounts and national social security schemes. Access to technology, markets and trade should be promoted. International financial institutions should include these positive actions in their programmes and projects and monitor them. The goal of equal pay for work of equal value should be actively promoted with a view to achieving it by the year 2000 through such measures as job evaluation and the establishment of equal pay legislation covering both the formal and the informal sectors. Redress mechanisms should be set up for women who have experienced discrimination and monitoring instruments established.

Create a flexible work environment

90. Actions by Governments, non-governmental organizations, business, professional and trade associations and the private sector should lead to the creation of a work environment that facilitates women's participation in economic activities. This should include providing opportunities for both women and men to reconcile family and economic responsibilities through flexible administrative regulations, parental leave, providing for part-time work with benefits and flexible hours, individual taxation, and provision of social support services such as child and dependant care and occupational health care.

Special measures should be taken to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace.

G. Strengthen factors that promote the full and equal participation of women in power structures and decision-making at all levels and in all areas

91. Actions should address the lack of full and equal participation at all levels and in all sectors. This should include sharing of decision-making at the level of the family, in the community and at higher levels of decision-making. Separate actions should be developed respectively to promote participation in public decision-making and in the private sector. The actions should lead to significant progress in achieving the target of parity.

Ensure the training of women to become decision makers

92. Priority actions in education and training related to participation of women in decision-making should be developed by Governments and non-governmental organizations. These should include the revision of school curricula and teaching materials to reflect equality, women's rights, the contribution made by women to decision-making, promote the norm of sharing of decision-making in the family and provide a basis of knowledge about power structures and decision-making, including revision of textbooks as appropriate. Actions should also include traditional and non-traditional training programmes targeted towards women that are designed to equip them for participation in management and decision-making in the public and private sectors. At the community level, action should include leadership training; in Government and public and private enterprises, it should include training programmes throughout their careers in management and professional development; in legislatures and other public decision-making bodies, it should include orientation about the political and legislative processes. This responsibility should be undertaken with the cooperation of the United Nations system and other governmental, regional and international organizations.

Provide equal access, participation and opportunity in careers in all sectors

93. Legislative and administrative action should be taken to ensure the equal opportunity of women to enter public service, the private sector, political parties, professional associations, trade unions and other non-governmental organizations, and to be assured of equal treatment in career development. Efforts should be made by Governments and non-governmental organizations to promote networking among women in these organizations.

Take positive measures to bring women into decision-making rapidly

94. Temporary positive measures should be developed to overcome the present effects of past discrimination that have led to a low number of women in public decision-making positions. The actions that can be taken will depend on the political traditions of each country, but should include efforts on a voluntary or mandatory basis to appoint women and men on a parity basis to advisory boards, setting targets for including women in lists of candidates for public office by political parties and setting targets for the appointment of women to the public service at decision-making levels. The organizations of the United Nations system should set an example by achieving gender balance by the year 2000.

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Create an enabling environment for equal participation

95. Actions should be taken to provide an enabling environment for women to
participate in decision-making. These should include providing appropriate
social support facilities such as day care, making career patterns flexible, and
revising administrative rules and customary practices for decision-making to
adapt them to the needs of both male and female decision makers and managers to
reconcile family and public responsibilities.

Use information to facilitate support for women in decision-making

96. Dissemination of information about participation of women in decision-
making as well as about women's views is an important means for monitoring
progress and mobilizing for change. Data from the public and private sectors
should be collected, analysed and disseminated at both the national and the
international levels on the number and proportion of women in decision-making
bodies, on the nature of obstacles faced and on the qualitative nature and
effects of their participation. Governments should report, in detail,
especially through the media, on participation, and national researchers should
be supported by Governments and non-governmental organizations. The United
Nations should continue to collect and disseminate statistics on women in
decision-making and promote analysis of the differences made in public and
private decision-making, both in terms of the types of decisions made and in the
nature of decision-making itself, when the proportion of women increases.

H.   Integrate gender-equality dimensions into policy and programme
     planning and implementation at all levels and in all areas

97. Actions should encourage mainstreaming of gender-equality issues at all
levels and in all areas of policy and programme planning by establishing
appropriate, adequately resourced and strategically placed information-
gathering, dissemination and monitoring mechanisms. Actions should be taken by
Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system, on
the basis of mutual support.

Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning
and evaluation

98. Governments and the United Nations system should increase the collection of
statistics and indicators disaggregated by sex and develop new quantitative and
qualitative indicators that can show the gender dimension of policies and
programmes. Measures should be taken to strengthen and increase the analysis of
this information in the context of policy development, monitoring and evaluation
and adequate support should be given to research institutions developing
analysis, especially on emerging and priority issues having a gender dimension.
The resulting information should be widely disseminated at both the national and
the international levels. International cooperation should be intensified in
this area.

Strengthen national machinery for the advancement of women for the
implementation of the Platform for Action

99. Actions should be taken to define a clear mandate for national machinery,
place them at the highest political level of Government, provide adequate staff
and resources, upgrade the positions, provide financial autonomy and direct
international linkages with other national machinery and with the United Nations

system in order to be independent, promote a global gender equality policy, monitor other governmental institutions, and integrate their concerns at all levels and in all areas. Measures should be taken to facilitate the active participation of and coordination with non-governmental organizations and related agencies and institutions doing research on women. Actions are also required to ensure close integration of women in advisory consultative bodies with national machinery.

Train in gender analysis

100. Governments should develop tools for gender analysis and require government officials to apply these tools in developing policies and programmes; all key personnel should be trained in gender analysis as a tool for planning, implementation and monitoring programmes and projects. The United Nations should assist countries by developing models for gender analysis for national policies and programmes; the employment of women in policy development and programme implementation institutions, especially for sustainable development, should be promoted.

I. Apply and enforce international norms and standards to promote and safeguard the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights

101. Women should be able to enjoy their rights on a full and equal basis and actions should be taken that will enable women to exercise their rights. The actions should cover all international human rights instruments and their monitoring mechanisms. They should ensure that national norms reflect international norms and that both are applied and enforced through mechanisms that are open, accessible and effective.

Make international instruments effective

102. All human rights treaty bodies should include the status of women and the human rights of women in their deliberations and findings and make use of gender-specific data. States should supply information on the situation of women de jure and de facto in their reports to treaty-monitoring bodies and also work with all special rapporteurs and working groups on human rights in this respect. The High Commissioner for Human Rights should monitor coordination and cooperation among all human rights mechanisms on identification of violations of and enjoyment by women of their human rights. Improved cooperation should be developed between the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights. Governments that have not yet done so should accede to human rights conventions, including especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, so that universal ratification is achieved by the year 2000. Non-governmental organizations should work vigorously to change this through advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns. States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are urged to withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention or that are otherwise incompatible with international treaty law. Sufficient resources should be provided in the regular budget of the United Nations to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

Implement international norms in national practice

103. Governments are encouraged to take steps to give effect in national laws, administrative regulations and public policies to the provisions of international conventions, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international instruments such as the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and United Nations principles for elderly persons. Action should be taken to enact laws that establish women's rights to autonomy, particularly in the area of family law and property rights. National machinery for the advancement of women and national human rights institutions should monitor the process and provide input to it. Non-governmental organizations should support this process. Special measures should be taken to safeguard, promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and freedoms by non-citizen women (i.e., women migrant workers, other migrant women, refugee and displaced women, temporary workers), women with disabilities, women in situations of internal and international armed conflict, and indigenous women. Special measures should be taken to improve the equal enjoyment by rural women of their human rights.

Achieve legal literacy

104. Governments and non-governmental organizations should take steps to improve awareness about the human rights of women and to create an environment in which women can exercise those rights. These steps should include campaigns to inform women about their rights under international instruments and national laws and to provide training in the functioning of the legal system. Human rights education with a gender perspective should be included in the curriculum. Measures should be taken to make public administration in general, at both the national and the local level, aware of women's human rights and to improve women's access to justice through providing legal assistance, streamlining procedures and orienting judicial personnel, police and other public officials, especially at the community level, about women's human rights.

J.   **Enhance the role of traditional and modern communications media to promote awareness of equality between women and men effectively**

105. Actions to encourage the communications media to promote awareness depend on the approach taken in each country. The media should be accountable for presenting a positive image of women. In some countries, actions would emphasize encouragement by non-governmental organizations of the media to promote equality. In other countries where communications media are public, action would emphasize the use of guidelines. When the media are controlled by the Government, Governments should encourage the media to provide a positive portrayal of women. National actions should be accompanied by support of the United Nations system to study the impact of communications on the promotion of equality.

Guarantee the access of women to information and participation in the media

106. Governments should take steps to guarantee the rights of all people to communicate, disseminate and exchange information and to ensure the access by women to information and to the media on an equal basis. Governments should support non-governmental organizations developing information material based on national experience. Measures should be taken to guarantee more balanced participation of women in government-owned media at the decision-making level.

Eliminate gender stereotyping in the media

107. Governments and non-governmental organizations should encourage a more positive presentation of women in the mass media, through studies, awareness campaigns, promoting the development of codes of conduct and other forms of self-regulation by media institutions, including advertising associations and others. National machineries should promote measures towards a more positive image of women. Encouragement should be given to target messages about gender equality. The diverse and changing social and economic roles of women in society should be accurately portrayed in terms of society at large and for young people.

K. Promote action to develop the mutual responsibility of women and men to achieve equality

108. Actions to develop mutual responsibility should be found throughout the strategic objectives, but there should be special measures to encourage the specific strategic objective by targeting men and women and encouraging partnership on an equal basis. Actions can be taken by Governments through public programmes, including education, by non-governmental organizations through campaigns, advocacy and training, and by international institutions through research, information dissemination and gender-sensitive programmes. They should inspire a new generation of women and men working together for equality.

Encourage sharing of family and other responsibilities

109. Actions should include measures to support couples and parents in reconciling their family and unpaid work responsibilities. These can include measures to provide for recognition of mutual and equal responsibility in law, promotion of flexible working environments, and promotion of technologies which facilitate the sharing and reduce the burden of domestic chores. They should promote a climate of opinion conducive to addressing the needs of workers with family responsibilities, including changing attitudes and practices of employers, Governments and trade unions to support workers with family responsibilities, including those from different cultural and socio-economic groups. Affirmative action policies should be promoted that assist in counteracting negative aspects of the impact of women's family responsibilities on their roles in the public sphere. They should promote the benefits for men of improved relationships and greater satisfaction through increased responsibility for family matters.

Improve communication between women and men

110. Governments should introduce family-life education and education for self-reliance at all levels. Non-governmental organizations should develop campaigns to raise awareness about mutual responsibility and improved sensitivity to gender-equality issues, especially among young people.

V. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

111. Based on an analysis of the probable content of section IV, financial arrangements should address the strategic objectives contained in the Platform for Action. The Conference should lead to a clear commitment by Governments and the international community to allocate funds required to undertake the

activities to achieve the objectives set out in the Platform. Resources should be creatively sought from many sources, but should include a concerted effort to reallocate existing resources worldwide at all levels through setting priorities and identifying the gender dimension of existing programmes. They should emphasize the high rate of return, especially over the medium and long term, from investing in women, and their multiplier effect on other programmes. Actions are required for new additional resources to be mobilized to implement the Platform for Action in a cost-effective manner.

112. At the national level, this should include applying gender-sensitive planning and evaluation to all public spending, including identifying the amounts directed to benefit women and their impact. Existing programmes directed to women should be maintained and made more effective, by giving highest priority to those programmes that show a high rate of return from programmes targeted to women's concerns. A greatly increased commitment to implement the Platform for Action should be promoted through intensive and imaginative campaigns by Governments and by non-governmental organizations. Governments should make concrete commitments to implement priority areas of the Platform for Action by the year 2000 with appropriate mechanisms designed to monitor compliance. National machinery should be given a critical role in influencing macroeconomic policies, through consultation in their formulation, financing, implementation and monitoring. Given the large growth of non-governmental organizations concerned with women's equality, there should be institutionalized systems of financial support to, and networking by, Governments and the United Nations system.

113. At the international, regional and subregional levels, the emphasis should be on evaluating and coordinating the programmes undertaken by organizations of the United Nations system in order to improve their contribution to the implementation of the Platform for Action and to indicate their gender impact. There should be a diagnosis of the existing situation with regard to resource allocation to women's activities by the United Nations system as a basis for proposing new approaches to resource allocations in United Nations system programmes. International financial institutions should address the negative effects of structural adjustment on women, particularly as a result of reduction of social spending, as well as the benefits from targeting programmes to women. In addition to mobilizing existing mainstream programmes to take a gender approach, new initiatives might be considered.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION
AND MONITORING OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION

114. Existing institutions should be strengthened and new arrangements established, where needed, at the national, regional and international levels, with mandates to monitor the implementation of the Platform for Action. They should provide inputs into policy and planning as well. Steps should be taken to promote cooperation and coordination among non-governmental organizations and national machineries for the advancement of women.

115. National machineries are in place in most countries, but there remains a need to analyse their impact, to strengthen their mandate, to increase their resources and capacities, and to upgrade their position in the national political structure. They should play the key role in monitoring the implementation of the Platform for Action at the national level and have an impact on policy-making. Links between the national machineries and national planning and policy-making structures should be reinforced and special

mechanisms for mainstreaming established, to ensure incorporation of a gender perspective in all planning and budgeting exercises. Cooperation between national machineries and non-governmental organizations should be increased as well as among national machineries in different countries.

116. At the regional level, establishment or strengthening of existing structures in the regional commissions is necessary to permit the monitoring and assist in the implementation of regional plans of action, as well as of regional dimensions of the Platform for Action. Restructuring and revitalization of coordinating and cooperating bodies at the regional level should be considered.

117. At the international level, the role and mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women should be reviewed and updated to strengthen its capacity to develop policies and monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Platform for Action both at the national level and within the United Nations system. The procedures by which Governments, non-governmental organizations and organizations of the United Nations system will report on progress should be defined. The network of focal points in the United Nations system should be strengthened, as well as the offices of the focal points in the various organizations. At the centre of the network, the Division for the Advancement of Women should be strengthened through provision of additional human and financial resources to undertake the new tasks as well as to support the full implementation of existing mandates. Efforts should be made to establish effective links with national machinery, research institutions and non-governmental organizations. The mainstreaming mechanisms in the United Nations system should also be strengthened in the context of the Platform for Action. United Nations inter-agency coordination for the advancement of women should be regularized and strengthened. The Secretary-General should report annually to the General Assembly on progress made in following up the results of the Beijing Conference and, in particular, the implementation of the Platform for Action.

United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
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PROGRESS AND OBSTACLES IN GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

prepared by the

Division for the Advancement of Women
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Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development
United Nations, New York

PROGRESS AND OBSTACLES IN GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING*

CONTENTS

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* The draft is based on the work of Ms. Maria Hartl of the Division for the Advancement of Women.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a powerful instrument of public action and can act as a catalyst for change at all levels for all women. For many girls and women, school or literacy classes may be the only occasion when they are exposed to a wider world, receiving social recognition and gaining self-esteem. Education is empowerment and can promote social change. Education and training in all its forms contributes to a transformation of power relations by giving women access to information, knowledge and skills.

Backed up by international instruments, the numbers of educated men and women have consistently increased in the past decades and have reached record numbers in terms of years of schooling completed. Gender, age and race differences continue to persist, as the findings of this report will show. Moreover, due to the economic crisis in many parts of the developing world, a general devaluation of education is being witnessed. Bearing in mind that education has a cumulative and lagged effect which often brings results only one generation later and that the educational attainments of the present adult generation cannot be easily influenced, it is obvious that the quality of education in the broadest sense and the importance of lifelong learning need to be addressed. Today's women in leadership positions earned their academic degrees one generation or more ago. They are products of the increase in access to and expansion of educational facilities at secondary education in all regions. Since education is an investment in the future, educational planning is important. If educational opportunities in some regions do not increase parallel to the population increase, the education of the present and future generations is affected.

II. EDUCATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Education has a human rights dimension. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that "everyone has a right to education". This has often been neglected in the list of basic human needs and has only recently received more attention, when economists and development planners recognized that education and human resource development are key factors in promoting development. There is evidence that education has an impact on health, mortality, productivity, household income and fertility rates. The social returns to a woman's education go far beyond individual welfare and are vital to national development. Potential economic gains result from the expansion of women's income earning capacities. Special efforts need to be made to reach the excluded and the vulnerable, in particular, girls in some regions and countries, girls of ethnic minorities and indigenous groups.

Several international instruments put forward the rights of girls and women to education. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination calls for the elimination of discrimination against women in order to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education.[1] It asks for the same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and obtaining of diplomas at all levels of schooling. The Convention requests access to the same curricula and examinations, to scholarships and other study grants, to programmes of continuing education including adult and functional literacy programmes and to information on family planning. It addresses the drop-out rates of female students and asks for the provision of special programmes for girls who leave school prematurely. It stresses that girls should be given the same opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education. It recognizes the need to eliminate stereotyped roles of men and women at all levels and in all aspects of education. As of 1 October 1994, there were 135 States parties to the Convention. All of the States of Latin America and the Caribbean as well as

almost all States in Europe, South-eastern and Eastern Asia and a majority of states in the other regions are party to the Convention.

The World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990 drew attention to the gender gap in educational opportunities and its consequences for human development. Article 3.3 emphasizes that the education of girls and women constitutes a priority. It calls in particular for the elimination of all gender stereotyping in education. The World Declaration calls for a "supportive policy context".[2]

The Convention on the Rights of the Child contains in its Article 28 provisions to the right to education, including the right to compulsory and free primary education and access to all to secondary, vocational and higher education. It also claims equal rights for girls and boys to education and asserts the importance of education as a social and cultural right. It affirms that every child has the right to a non-discriminatory education that fully respects cultural identity and language needs.

III. REVIEWING AND APPRAISING THE NAIROBI FORWARD LOOKING STRATEGIES

The Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Nairobi, 1985, consider education as "the basis for the full promotion and improvement of the status of women" (Paragraph 163-173).[3] Recommendations related to education for women are set out as an area of development, but references to the need for formal and non-formal education and training are made in many other sections of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies. Governments agreed to encourage public and private schools to examine educational materials and textbooks and to eliminate discriminatory gender-stereotyping, to redesign textbooks that reflect a positive and dynamic image of women and to include women's studies in the curricula. They also agreed to take steps to diversify women's vocational training and to create integrated systems for training that have direct links with employment needs and future trends.

The first review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies in 1990 gives evidence that changes have taken place in formal education.[4] In the decade from 1970 to 1980, programmes to improve women's access to education have been effective in many regions, especially for younger women. Equality between men and women in school enrolment had been achieved in several regions, although not in those where the majority of the world' population is located. However, it shows that this change has affected only a small number of countries. Modest progress had been achieved in Africa, which could be largely attributed to national development plans and the fact that education at the primary level had been free in many countries. In Asia and the Pacific, the pervasive influence of traditional social attitudes and feudal patriarchal systems were identified as the main obstacles to women's emancipation and education. In Latin America and the Caribbean, major differences exist between countries, between rural and urban areas. Indigenous populations have less access, while opportunities at higher-income levels were nearly equal. Few countries seemed to have engaged in a comprehensive strategy to advance women's education.

In the recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the Commission on the Status of Women emphasized that the perpetuation of

stereotyped images of male and female roles in textbooks and the glorification of traditional roles in the media was inhibiting women's advancement.[5] It recommended that in both formal and non-formal education, Governments should promote the training of teachers on gender issues, co-education and counselling. Governments should complete the revision of textbooks by 1995 in order to eliminate sex-biased presentations and take steps to reduce the stereotyping of women in the mass media. With regard to women's access to education, it was recommended that resources should be reoriented to ensure women's equal access to education and training at all levels and in all fields. Gender-related differences in adult literacy should be removed by the year 2000. The study of scientific and technological subjects by girls should be encouraged.

The second review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies is part of the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995. Member states of the United Nations have been invited to contribute national reports and build them around eight critical areas of concern that had been identified by the Commission on the Status of Women. Any changes that have occurred since the early eighties were to be indicated. A set of key statistical and other indicators was intended to permit a thorough examination in each area of concern. In the field of education, governments were requested to provide information on female illiteracy, enrolment rates and completion at primary and secondary level, graduation in the tertiary level, technical education and female/male teacher ratios at all levels. The present report is built on information provided by a sample of national reports available in September 1994 as well as additional sources.

IV. PROGRESS ACHIEVED AND PERSISTENT GAPS IN FEMALE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

A. Literacy

Nine-hundred five million men and women are illiterate world-wide; 65 percent of which are women. [6] In all regions of the world, the illiteracy rate of women has been steadily declining. With the exception of Africa, important progress has been made in eliminating both adult illiteracy and the differentials between female and male illiteracy. High illiteracy rates in Africa and Asia and the Pacific are a reflection of past discrimination and lack of education. In the present age group 15-24 years, illiteracy rates are significantly lower due to higher levels of school enrollment.

Global figures on literacy mask disparities between countries within a region and between rural and urban areas. The literacy gap between men and women, especially in the rural areas of developing countries persists. Countries with high levels of indigenous populations have higher disparities in female/male literacy ratios. In the developed countries, the percentage of illiterates is higher among immigrant populations and people living in poverty. In the Caribbean region, for example, low levels of illiteracy are reported, such as 10 percent for Barbados, Guyana, the Netherlands Antilles, even reaching 2 percent in Cuba, while Haiti reports a 65 percent rate in 1985 and St. Lucia a 54 percent illiteracy rate in 1991. Despite a general improvement in Asia and the Pacific, significantly high illiteracy rates among women persist in some parts of the region. There are 62 percent of female illiterates in South Asia, indicating a 5.5 percent increase compared to the 1985 figure, while female illiteracy in South-eastern Asia has decreased to 24 percent

Figures on illiteracy also do not necessarily reflect the level of functional illiteracy. Sudan reports that, as a result of low levels of schooling and educational achievements,

functional illiteracy is growing among men and women. In some countries large numbers of the population remain illiterate and lack a general knowledge of history, current events and societal problems. They also lack the knowledge of basic skills how to operate machines and equipment. Functional literacy has an impact on income generating activities, hygiene and protection of the environment.

Table 1. Average percent of men and women who were illiterate in 1980- and 1990 census rounds, by region

A. Over 15 years of age

Region	1980 round		1990 round	
	% men	% women	% men	% women
Africa	51.8	71.8	44.6	61.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	18.2	23.3	14.3	16.0
Western Europe and other	5.7	11.4	8.7	9.9
Asia and the Pacific	31.8	49.3	21.7	34.3
Eastern Europe	1.5	4.9	.9	2.3

B. 15 -24 years of age

Region	1980 round		1990 round	
	% men	% women	% men	% women
Africa	35.8	55.7	35.6	51.0
Latin America and the Caribbean	9.0	10.3	7.5	6.9
Western Europe and other	1.0	1.0	2.6	1.2
Asia and the Pacific	19.7	32.6	10.3	17.9
Eastern Europe	.5	.9	na	na

C. 25-44 years of age

Region	1980 round		1990 round	
	% men	% women	% men	% women
Africa	50.7	74.4	35.3	58.3
Latin America and the Caribbean	14.1	19.4	5.3	7.3
Western Europe and other	2.5	4.7	5.5	3.7
Asia and the Pacific	26.7	44.7	20.2	35.8
Eastern Europe	.7	2.4	na	na

Source: Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, based on information contained in Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT), version 3, 1994.

Many national reports suggest that illiterate women have a great desire for learning. This strong motivation coupled with attractive programmes is a driving force for the acceptance of and success of literacy programmes. Illiterate women in Chad were reported as having regretted that they have not been in school and consider illiteracy as a major obstacle to their advancement. In Haiti, where women have not been a specific target population for literacy programmes, there has been a considerable increase in the number of female participants between 1972 and 1982. A few countries indicate that the literacy rate among women is dropping at a faster rate than that of men. In Egypt, for example, urban illiteracy

for men remained constant between 1976 and 1986, while it dropped by 9.5% for women during the same period. In St. Christopher and Nevis, adult education literacy programmes geared at educating adults and exposing them to income generating opportunities, developing positive attitudes and sensitizing youth to the dignity of work have attracted more women than men.

Mass literacy campaigns constitute the most effective strategy for elimination of widespread illiteracy among adult women within a set time frame. Such campaigns have been carried out in the past in China, the former USSR, Vietnam, Cuba and Tanzania. India is one of the countries undertaking mass campaigns for literacy in various districts. Literacy campaigns are more successful when they take into account the social condition of women and are linked to income generating activities. Some countries report on the obstacles they have encountered. Without follow-up, the benefits of non-formal literacy programmes have been negligible in Ethiopia. Mali reports that the discontinuity of funds, the financial and material incapacity of communities to take charge of the training, motivation of volunteers and irregularities in the follow-up activities are major obstacles for successful implementation of literacy campaigns. In Malawi, the major obstacles in the literacy programme is the lack of continuing education opportunities which would ensure that women who already know how to read and write continue their education.

Trainers play an important catalyst role in literacy campaigns. Liberia recognized the need for a clearly defined literacy policy and the involvement of young people to assist with the literacy process. In India, literate women are trained as instructors.

B. Formal education

1. Primary education

In the last decade, substantive and successful efforts were made to attract girls to attend primary schools. On a regional level, girls' enrolment has achieved parity with boys' except in Africa and Asia. The lowest rates persist in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central and Southern Asia.

Table 2 . Average ratio of girls to boys in schools, by level and region, 1970-1990

	Primary education		
Region	*1970*	*1980*	*1990*
Africa	65	74	79
Latin America and the Caribbean	94	95	95
Western Europe and other	95	95	95
Asia and the Pacific	66	78	84
Eastern Europe	94	94	96
World	77	84	87

Source: Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, based on information contained in Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT), version 3, 1994.

In the ESCAP subregions, mean years for schooling for girls have increased from 2.99 in 1980 to 3.58 in 1990, while in South Asia, girls spent on average only

1.26 years in school in 1990 (1980: 1.16). Some countries report significant increases in female enrolment which reflects a political will to promote girls' education. Bhutan has increased primary school enrolment for girls by 68 percent from 1984 to 93, while boys registered a growth of only 11 percent This important increase can be explained by the fact that before 1984 the value of education in a modern environment was not fully appreciated in a country that opened the first modern school in the 1950s and tried to gain the confidence of the parents to send their daughters to school.

The African region remains the most under-educated continent in the world. Almost half of the children of primary school age are out of school, the majority of which are girls. Nevertheless yet, Africa has made an important effort on the supply side to cater for the educational needs of its growing population. On a global level, primary enrolments in Africa more than tripled between 1960 and 1989, while they have doubled in Asia and Latin America. This expansion was subsequently reduced in the eighties.[7] In many countries with high population growth, the planning of new educational facilities did not meet the actual need. The educational sector in Nigeria, for example, has continued to expand rapidly. The number of primary schools doubled from nearly 20,000 in 1975/76 when the universal primary education was launched to over 37,000 by 1982/83. The number of pupils, however, increased from 6 million to 14.5 million during that period. An increase of 85 percent of the supply side stands against an increase of 140 percent on the demand side.

The economic crisis and measures of structural adjustment in the eighties had their impact on the educational system. Developing countries in general maintained and even slightly increased public expenditures on education, expressed as a proportion of their national income during the 1980s. Moreover during this period national incomes were very low, while population growth was significant. Thus, public expenditures on education per capita in sub-Saharan Africa fell by more than one-half between 1980 and 1989.[8] Cuts in public expenditures affected the educational sector. In Zaire, for example, a decrease from 3.6% in 1980 to 1.7% in 1985 and to 1.4% in 1988 brought with it a decrease in the quality of education and lower enrolment. In Togo, enrolment decreased among male students from 90% in 1981 to 62 % in 1985 because of the closure of many schools from 1983 onwards. A subsequent increase in 1990/91 to 78 % remained far below the 1981 level. Interestingly, the rate for girls remained more or less stable: shifting similarly from 55 % in 1981 to 42% in 1984/85 and to 56% in 1990/91. In Senegal, the enrolment figures for boys decreased while increasing for girls since 1985.

In countries with very low levels of education, disparities between rural and urban areas have been observed with high drop out and repetition rates up to 70 % in first cycle in disadvantaged areas . In Mali, where only 17-20% of girls are enrolled, the difference between enrolment in rural and urban areas is significant ranging from 13 % to 59 % respectively.

The work load of adult women in rural areas has also an important impact on the education of their daughters. According to this perspective, customary and traditional attitudes assign the education of the daughter to the mother. If a girl attends school, she escapes parental control for a long period of the day and year. It is also criticized that too much emphasis is placed in school on intellectual development at the expense of practical skills. Traditional attitudes include the view that the daughter's dowry is a source of profit and additional income. Unequal sharing of domestic responsibilities between boys and girls are obstacles to girls' attendance. In some countries, legislation has prevented girls from attending school. In Mali, legislation on physical inaptitude was an obstacle for girls' enrolment.

An important contributor to low female enrolment rates in education is the cost factor. In Liberia, the annual cost per pupil for primary education may be as high as a rural family's annual cash income. The annual cost of educating a child in secondary school is even greater. If a family decides to educate a child, culture and economics favour the male. In Mauritius, the introduction of free secondary education in 1976 was intended to benefit both boys and girls alike. Subsequent analysis of the impact of this decision showed that boys were being educated while girls were being kept at home if there was not enough money to pay for both. In practice, free education meant that the girls attended school.

Drop out rates are very high for both girls and boys, with national and regional differences. In the Caribbean, drop-out rates for boys are higher than for girls. Guyana reports that boys leave schools early in order to earn income or supplement family income. In addition to economic reasons, customary attitudes have an impact on drop-outs. Bangladesh reports high drop-out rates with 58.3% of boys and 45.9 percent of girls dropping out at primary level and 57.6 percent of boys and 65.9 percent of girls not finishing secondary education.

In many African countries, the educational achievements of girls remain problematic. In Malawi, only 27 percent of girls passed the primary school leaving examinations in 1992/93. Several projects have been launched to remedy this situation such as the abolishing of school fees for girls who do not repeat classes, social mobilisation campaigns and the introduction of a bursary scheme for girls, which provides tuition, uniform and learning materials. Inadequate teaching and educational materials, poorly qualified teachers and inappropriate curricula are some of the constraints that adversely affected the student achievement levels especially girls. Early pregnancy and marriage, traditional practices such as circumcision and the generally low perception of the value or utility of education for girls' are additional obstacles.

2. Secondary education

Enrolment in secondary education is reaching parity in the developed countries and Eastern Europe. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the ratio of girls to boys is higher, indicating that more girls now remain in secondary education than boys. In 11 countries within the region, girls' enrolment rates exceed those of boys. The increase in the ratio of girls to boys in the African and Asia and Pacific region in only one generation (1970-1990) is considerable, but is still far from reaching parity.

Table 3. Average ratio of girls to boys in secondary education, by level and region, 1970-1990

	Secondary education		
Region	1970	1980	1990
Africa	46	57	69
Latin America and the Caribbean	98	107	109
Western Europe and other	90	98	98
Asia and the Pacific	58	70	77
Eastern Europe	97	91	94
World	67	80	85

Source: Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, based on information contained in Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT), version 3, 1994

Some developed countries report significant increases. In Australia, the number of girls staying in school to year 12 has increased from less than 37.3 percent in 1980 to 82 percent in 1992 (compared with 72.5 per cent for boys). In the United States, women have been narrowing the education gap. The figure increased from 53 percent of women completing their high school in 1970 to 75 percent in 1990.

One reason for the unequal female/male ratio in secondary education can be attributed to differences in cultural attitudes. In some countries and cultures, where the privacy and seclusion of girls is required to protect their reputation, restrictions are put on female mobility at the onset of puberty. Girls are thereby prevented from taking advantage of existing educational opportunities. In order to increase enrolment of girls in secondary schools, several measures have been taken including the establishment of single sex schools. Bangladesh decided to establish a separate secondary school for girls in each sub-district. The political will to encourage girls' education is a prerequisite for increasing enrolment. For example in Indonesia , the female/male disparity at secondary level was reduced by more than half during the 1980s. Affirmative action programmes are a means to promote girls access to secondary level education. In Malawi, 33 percent of the total secondary school enrolment slots are reserved for girls. It is interesting to note that in some countries enrolment rates for females increased whereas they decreased for males. In Egypt, the secondary enrolment in 1980/81 was 62.5 percent for males and 37.5 percent for females, while it was 56.5 percent for males and 43.3 % for females. In the Caribbean and in some Latin American countries, girls perform better than boys in terminal examinations at the secondary level. In the United Kingdom, girls currently out-perform boys in science subjects in examinations in the age group 16 to 18.

On a global level, the rate of distribution among various subjects of specialization reveals a large gap in the female/male ratio in arts, literature, science and mathematics. Female secondary students are clustered in traditional fields of study. This is a decisive factor in determining whether women enrol in university to major in non traditional areas or pursue vocational and technical or industrial training. When selecting their subjects, girls tend not to focus as much as boys on long-term planning taking into account career choices and labour-market conditions.

3. Tertiary education

Women are increasingly entering colleges and universities. However, a huge gap persists between Africa and other regions. While the numbers of men and women in higher education are approaching parity in the developed countries, there is a higher proportion of girls than boys in tertiary education in some regions. This also applies to Latin America and the Caribbean as well as to Eastern Europe, where a similar increase of girls' enrolment has occurred. In Latin America and the Caribbean, a generational transition is taking place with a trend towards a female population that is proportionally better educated than the male population. (Table. 4)

The ratio of girls to boys in law and business in tertiary education is also uneven. Female enrolment in Africa increased slightly but remains far behind the spectacular rise of female enrolment in law and business in Latin America and the Caribbean. (Table. 5)

The ratio of boys and girls in specific fields of study has also undergone significant changes in the past two decades. More and more women are enrolling in fields once dominated by men. Whereas the African region is stagnant concerning the average ratio of girls and boys in science and technology fields, all other regions demonstrate considerable

progress and are approaching parity. Eastern Europe is the only region where the situation is regressing. (Table. 6)

**Table 4. *Average ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education,
by level and region, 1970-1990***

Region	Tertiary education		
	1970	1980	1990
Africa	20	30	32
Latin America and the Caribbean	72	74	106
Western Europe and other	53	72	94
Asia and the Pacific	46	63	84
Eastern Europe	78	106	104
World	46	61	75

**Table 5. *Average ratio of girls to boys in law and business
in tertiary education, by region, 1970-1990***

Region	1970	1980	1990
Africa	12	43	36
Latin America and the Caribbean	30	92	97
Western Europe and other	25	54	85
Asia and the Pacific	25	56	70
Eastern Europe	64	134	124
World	25	63	102

**Table 6. *Average ratio of girls to boys in science and technology fields
in tertiary education, by region, 1970-1990***

Region	1970	1980	1990
Africa	24	21	24
Latin America and the Caribbean	37	54	80
Western Europe and other	29	49	67
Asia and the Pacific	33	45	70
Eastern Europe	61	81	74
World	32	43	56

Source: Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Secretariat, based on information contained in Women's Indicators and Statistics Data Base (WISTAT), version 3, 1994.

Some countries report important increases in female enrolment and completion. In Egypt for instance, the number of female university graduates increased from 8 percent in 82/83 to 22 percent in 89/90. Forty-four percent of those studying medicine were women in 89/90 compared to only 27 percent in 82/83. In China, the number of female postgraduates increased by 157 percent from 1985 to 1992, of female college and university graduates by 143 percent and of female graduates from secondary vocational schools by 157 percent Various reasons may account for the increase. Some countries eliminated gender-exclusive admission practices on the part of certain institutions. Some countries undertook reforms of the higher education system and integrated various post-secondary study programmes that mainly attracted women to the higher education system. Thus, 60 percent of all first year

students in Sweden are females while male students still dominate the extended programmes. Another reason given for the predominance of female students is the early entrance of men into the labour force which prevents the completion of their college degree. In the Philippines for example, in 1990 only 6.5 percent of men compared to 11.9 percent of women had completed a degree in the 20-24 age group .

In some Eastern European and former Socialist countries women have exceeded men in tertiary education, but these figures are changing. Seventy-four percent of all students in higher institutions and 54 percent of the university students are female in Bulgaria. In Slovenia, the percentage of women in programmes of higher education fell between 1980/81 and 1992/93, although they still predominate. The completion rate of female students is higher than that of their male colleagues. There were 58.6 percent women among the 1985/86 graduates and 60.4 percent in 1992/93.

In general, female students still enrol in traditionally female fields of studies. The highest increase in the number of female graduates has continued to occur in such fields as humanities, fine arts and education. In the United States, where college enrolment of women now exceeds that of men, the majority of women still choose subjects of study different from those of men which are less likely to lead to higher paying jobs. However, in ever increasing numbers, women are entering formerly male-dominated fields as law, medicine and business administration.

A few countries with low female enrolment rates in tertiary education report on measures of affirmative action taken to encourage young women to pursue their education. In Uganda, girls constituted approximately 25 percent of student enrolment between 1985-1990 at the national university. Enrolment increased to 33% by 1993 owing to a bonus system, from which 50 percent of all female students have directly benefited. Some countries report measures to increase the number of women in non-traditional fields of study. Australia is linking funding allocations to higher education institutions to progress achieved toward equity goals, while setting specific targets for the increase of the number of women in non-traditional courses and postgraduate study by 1995. In Sweden, the Government approved a ten-point programme for monitoring efforts to promote equality between women and men in higher education which proposed steps to increase the number of female graduate students.

The increase of women in higher education has started to have a visible effect in some careers which were until recently closed to women. Portugal reports that currently one third of magistrates and one sixth of diplomats are women. Women who have completed higher degrees have also an impact on economy. In Bulgaria, 56 percent of all economically active persons with academic qualifications are women. Reports from all regions indicate that equal education does not mean equality in professional qualifications or remuneration. The majority of women in Austria are employed in lower level jobs, despite higher educational qualifications than men.

Scholarships can be a means of encouraging and enabling girls to pursue their education. Developing countries criticize the attribution of scholarships by donor countries on a purely merit basis for those priority areas of study identified for future manpower needs. Traditional attitudes prevail in decisions concerning which students should be sent abroad to study. Scholarships can be a way to increase the number of females studying non-traditional fields. Mentoring programmes have been initiated in a number of developed countries like in Sweden and in the United States. Senior women scientists mentor school girls and young scientists on how to develop career strategies and paths as well as how to sustain motivation and inspirations. Vocational counselling and guidance are additional means used to encourage girls to opt for non-traditional career paths. For instance, Slovenia reports that such activities take place at secondary schools, while two universities also organise information

days. Despite the availability of information, typical patterns of choosing vocational programmes areas are maintained.

In countries where the provision of tertiary education is far from adequate the establishment of distance-learning programmes would benefit female students whose mobility and family situation does not allow them to attend courses as full-time students. Women's motivation to study and acquire further education is well illustrated by the high percentage of females (79.4 percent) compared to men (20.6 percent) studying in the School of Continuing Education at the University of the West Indies (Antigua and Barbados).

C. Non-formal education

Although formal education is the norm and is advocated for children aged 6-14 years, many children and in particular girls fall through the net of formal education because of its inaccessibility, high costs and irrelevancy.[9] Non-traditional programmes for out-of-school children provide a non institutional environment based on a learner centred curriculum and flexible schedule.

The role of non-governmental organizations in non-formal and basic education is being increasingly recognized. They are essential partners in the provision of basic education in developing countries with low levels of enrolment and urban to rural disparities. In many developing countries, non-governmental organizations are working complementary to the public education system. They receive increasing support from multi- and bilateral donor agencies for their work in the field of education. In developed countries, non-governmental organizations carry out research and campaigns.

1. Pre-school education

Pre-school education has grown rapidly over the last 10 years in many regions. Globally, there seem to be no gender differences between girls and boys with regard to enrolment in pre-school education where and when it is available. Available figures in Latin America and the Caribbean show that supply for pre-school education is directed primarily towards the middle and upper socio-economic strata.

With more mothers and fathers both employed and the disappearance of extended families, there is a growing need for child care of good quality. Research findings indicate that the children's environment from birth to age 3 helps to determine their brain structure and ability to learn. Infants and toddlers need intellectual stimulation, emotional nourishment and social guidance for healthy development. The shaping of gender roles also takes place during this period and pedagogical interventions in particular in the kindergartens can have an impact on later attitudes and behaviour patterns.

In developed countries, projects have been undertaken to remove gender stereotyping from pre-school education and to make pre-school teachers aware of gender bias in attitudes and behaviour. Sweden is developing equality affairs courses for future pre-school teachers and recreational leaders.

In all countries, nursery and pre-school teachers are exclusively women in both public and private schools. For example, in Antigua and Barbuda it is reported that all private schools are supervised by women and most are owned by women.

2. Basic education

Programmes in non-formal education have been carried out in many countries like Nepal, Bangladesh, India, the Dominican Republic, India, Thailand, Tanzania and others, at various rates of success. Specific conditions for success are the location of the classrooms in the local community, competent teachers recruited locally, free education with no hidden costs and convenient class schedules that take into account the girls' household and agricultural responsibilities. Girls in regions and cultures most resistant to female formal education are most eager to attend those schools and perform very successfully.

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) started non-formal primary education in 1985 and it was expanded to 4500 experimental schools teaching 100,000 children and 70 per cent are girls from rural landless families .

Most initiatives and programmes of non-formal schooling are financed through donor support and are dependent on financing from abroad.

3. Adult education

Activities in the field of continuing education for women are abundant and rich in their diversity. They range from literacy, income generation and politics to creative and spiritual programmes. They are carried out by a variety of organizations, including non-governmental organisations, political parties, educational institutions and foundations. Educational activities for adult women are a major component to awareness raising and increasing self-confidence among women. Training in legal literacy for example has gained importance since it is a necessary tool for making women aware of their human rights.

Nigeria reports that during the civilian rule political education of women was to a large extent part of the general function of political parties. Political parties which competed for power established viable women wings whose functions included inter alia mobilisation and political education of women.

In the United States, adult education programmes have been a vital resource for educationally disadvantaged women and young adult females, while not targeted to women. These findings support the trend that life-long learning needs more attention in times of rapid social and technical changes. Women are increasingly taking advantage of training opportunities offered to them. Life-long learning from a gender sensitive perspective could means that women's career interruptions for caring responsibilities offer an opportunity for 'vocational retraining' in order to re-enter the labour market.

D. Vocational training

The successful completion of education at the secondary level is not sufficient to prepare women to enter the labour market and technical and vocational training is usually considered necessary.

Obstacles to women in technical and vocational education identified in Africa include an inadequate knowledge of mathematics and science, limited opportunities for women to study technical subjects, inadequate policies for promoting technical and vocational education for women and a reluctance by employers to recruit qualified women for technical jobs. Many training programmes for women have been restricted to traditionally domestic activities such as sewing, cooking, embroidery and child care.

In developing countries, many vocational training programmes are concentrated in the capital city and a few provinces. Although many women attend these programmes, they are oriented towards typically female jobs. For example in Haiti, 79 percent of the students who attend vocational schools 1981-82 were women, but only 9 percent were enrolled in technical schools which are oriented towards the modern industrial sector and handicrafts.

In the Philippines, 19% of the 3.85 million 15 years old and over had completed post secondary vocational courses. Of this number, 53.4% were women, who dominated programmes related to business administration, medical diagnostic and treatment, home economics (domestic science) and service trade. Technical and vocational training is still male dominated, but there is an increasing number of women entering non-traditional courses such as engineering, agriculture, forestry and law.

For countries with a high level of migration and important gains in access to education, brain drain is a cause of concern. In the Philippines for example, education planners are faced with the question of whether the educational system is actually geared to producing female labour for export. Government health officials have decried the difficulties in recruiting medical school graduates for posts in rural communities. The doctor to population ratio is an embarrassment to a system which exports doctors and nurses by the thousands to developing countries.

Some countries conduct special programmes to enhance long-term employability of certain target groups such as young teenage mothers in the USA.

E. Special programmes

1. Education in emergency situations

The number of refugees has grown from about 1.3 million in the early 1960s to 11 million in the mid-1980s to over 18 million in 1992. In addition, 24 million people were displaced within their own countries. It is assumed that half of refugees and displaced persons are children. UNESCO and UNICEF have acknowledged the importance of assisting children who have been traumatized by war.

Sudan reported that the civil war resulted in the suspension of work in 20 universities and institutes of higher studies in the south. Primary schools, intermediate, secondary, vocational and teacher training centres were closed. Women comprise more than half of the female population.

2. Education for minority groups and girls with special needs

The children of minority populations and communities and indigenous populations have special educational needs because their distinctive culture and language should be respected and preserved. The Convention on the Rights of the Child established that national governments need to take an active role in protecting children from all forms of discrimination (Art. 2). In Europe, educational policies for gypsy and nomadic children have not been very successful, since enrolment rates in the European Union averaged only about 35 percent in 1989.[10] In countries in East and West Africa with large nomad and pastoralist minority populations, both formal and non-formal educational interventions have been weak and non-existent. Effective educational services are difficult to provide due to the high mobility and dispersal of the communities as well as the need for special teaching methods, language

instruction and curricula. Girls in these populations face a double disadvantage due to their general lack of education and their daily workload.

Girls with disabilities often lack access to education and training because educational facilities cannot cater for their special needs. The costs involved to provide equal opportunities for girls and women with disabilities are an obstacle that prevent many political decision-makers from providing adequate and needed services. Few countries report on the efforts to provide special educational facilities for girls and women with disabilities.

In many countries, there has been markedly less educational improvement amongst particular groups of girls such as migrant, aborigines, girls with disability or girls living in poverty. Many countries report on the special needs of immigrant women, visible minority women and female single parents and have adopted special programmes. Australia is paying attention to the special needs of girls from non-English speaking backgrounds, isolated rural areas, aborigines, economically disadvantaged groups. Canada is providing special scholarships for status indigenous women who want to pursue full-time or part-time post-secondary education. Two thirds of the students who receive such support are women.

3. Preventing and combating sexual harassment and violence in the schools

Several countries indicate in their national reports that sexual harassment is a problem at all educational levels. Studies in the United States confirm that the problem is widespread. Uganda reports on girls' vulnerability to sexual abuse compared to boys especially in urban areas where most large secondary schools and tertiary institutions are located. In the Netherlands, every school will have to take measures to combat sexual harassment by 1996.

4. Action by the international community

In recent years, economists and development planners have recognised that education, knowledge and human resource development are key factors in promoting national development. There is evidence that investing in the education of girls brings the highest return in the developing world today.[11] The most important joint activities of the international community in the field of education was the World Conference on Education for All, convened jointly by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank in Jomtien, Thailand 1990. The *World Declaration on Education for All* and the *Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs* represent a global consensus on an expanded vision of basic education and a commitment to ensure that the basic learning needs of all children, youth and adults are met effectively in all countries.[12]

With regard to children in emergency situations such as refugee children, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is providing for educational projects within the limits of its budget. The mandate of the UN Relief and Work Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) comprises explicitly the provision of education in addition to relief and health services for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA has carried out a variety of educational programmes including vocational training for women. Students from South Africa for a transitional period are being granted awards through the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

The bilateral donor community has made significant advances in promoting a gender perspective on basic education. Donors have implemented a variety of projects supporting basic education while focusing on questions of educational access and retention, supporting student and female teachers, assisting in curricula and textbook production and providing teacher training, literacy and vocational training.[13]

F. Women in teaching and educational decision-making

The male to female ratio in teaching varies according to the level of teaching. The percentage of female teachers is high at the primary level, decreases at the secondary level and declines further in universities and equivalent institutions. Women are generally under-represented in the higher status and higher paying categories. They are still under-represented in educational administration and as teachers of science, where they can have a image-shaping function on boys and girl.

Contrary to the developed regions and Latin American and the Caribbean, where women form the majority of the teachers in primary schools, the number of female teachers in Africa is very low. Few are appointed as principals into decision-making positions, most are relegated to inferior positions in the school hierarchy. At present the number of female teachers is increasing although at lower levels corresponding to the small number of women in higher education. Malawi, where the intake of female teacher trainees for the primary level was approximately half that of males between 1982 and 1991, reports that it has introduced a one year teacher education programme to cater for the shortage of teachers which has attracted female students in particular.

The training of teachers is often not adequate in many developing countries. In Uganda, approximately 50 percent of teachers are untrained while 20 percent are under-trained. In Haiti, the majority of teachers do not come from colleges of education. In many countries hit by economic crisis, a great number of trained teachers abandon the teaching profession. Some African countries report an increase in the number of teachers, but indicate that the economic crisis has affected education institutes. In Nigeria, the figure of female academic staff dropped by 25 percent from 1987/88 to 1989/90, a possible manifestation of the brain drain among academic staff for financial reasons.

Although the number of female academics in higher education is increasing globally and has, for example, doubled in Australia between 1985 and 1991, tenure is still heavily concentrated among older, more senior male academics. In the USA, there were 70 percent of female teachers but only 24 percent of female school principals and 4 percent of superintendents. Only 12 percent women were full professors with 35 percent as associate professors and 38 percent as assistant professors. Turkey reports that female university staff tend to be employed in support positions which lack promotional opportunities, such as specialist or instructor. In other cases, women have been promoted into new fields of studies and thus the figures increased. The Netherlands reports on an increase in the number of female professors by 4 percent which can be mainly attributed to newly appointed professors in women's studies.

Many countries have taken measures taken to ensure a greater representation of women in the teaching professions. In 1991, Austria has enacted changes in the law on university organisation which encourages the minister for science and research and the executive bodies of the universities to work towards achieving gender balance in universities.

Table. 7 Percentage teachers who are female, by level taught 1990

	Percentage of teachers female by level taught, 1990			Numbers of Countries/areas included in averages		
	First level	Second level	Univers ities and equiv.	First level	Second Univer sities level	and equiv.
DEVELOPED REGIONS	75	51	26	38	29	29
Eastern Europe[1]	78	53	31	15	11	12
Western European others	73	50	23	23	18	17
Western Europe	74	52	23	18	13	12
Other developed	72	47	23	5	5	5
AFRICA	40	25	16	46	38	28
Northern Africa[2]	48	35	23	5	5	3
Sub-Saharan Africa	39	23	15	41	33	25
LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	73	52	32	28	22	18
Latin America	74	51	27	17	12	8
Central America	74	46	27	6	5	3
South America	74	54	28	11	7	5
Caribbean	72	54	35	11	10	10
ASIA AND PACIFIC[3]	54	43	24	34	33	29
Eastern Asia[4]	67	45	26	6	5	6
South-eastern Asia	57	51	31	7	7	5
Central and Southern Asia	34	26	20	6	6	5
Western Asia	56	45	22	13	13	11
Oceania[5]	54	40	23	11	10	4

Sources: calculated from UNESCO education statistics database and Statistical Yearbook (Paris, various years up to 1993); Statistics Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean; national statistical yearbooks; and national census reports; and reports of national education ministries or departments

[1] Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia (and parts), former German Dem. Rep., Hungary, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Romania, the former USSR, Ukraine and Yugoslavia (and parts)

[2] Not including the Sudan, which is included in sub-Saharan Africa

[3] In obtaining unweighted averages for Asia and the Pacific, only two countries in Oceania are considered: Fiji and Papua New Guinea

[4] Excluding Japan, which is included with "Developed regions"

[5] Excluding Australia and New Zealand, which are included with "Developed regions"

There are few figures on women's active involvement in educational planning and decision-making. Some countries have realized that women have to be actively involved in the implementation of educational campaigns. Mali underlines that the involvement of women in the formulation of formal educational policies and their active participation in the design of policies and educational projects are key elements for successful literacy campaigns and means of empowerment.

G. Measures to remove gender bias in education and training

The quality of education is a question that goes beyond issues of access and performance, It extends beyond the satisfaction of basic educational needs to improved completion rates, critical awareness and empowerment. Much research has been done on gender stereotypes and bias in education and training in the past decade. The establishment of women' studies programmes in the undergraduate and graduate levels is the most visible acknowledgement of the need to examine gender issues in society and gender bias in education, training and research. Most countries claim to have at least the beginnings of women's studies curricula in progress, while in as many as 30 countries of the world women's studies centres and programmes function both inside and outside the formal educational system.

The first step undertaken in by many developing countries is the removal of gender bias in textbooks. Official textbooks mostly transmit gender-stereotyped values and attitudes and portray women as weak and passive and in traditional roles as mothers and housewives. Beyond the general recognition that stereotyping against women should be eliminated from textbooks and curricula with policy declarations made by many governments but no further action has been taken by many governments. Some countries have taken actions aimed at balancing illustrations and removing gender-biased contexts from textbooks have been carried out.. Others regret that no further guidelines have not yet been established.

Few countries have made a systematic attempt to change syllabi and course content, or taken other measures to foster non-stereotyped gender roles. The most common curricular innovations introduced are the inclusion of technical and home management subjects at the middle school level as common learning areas for boys and girls. The Philippines reformed its curricular nomenclature and changed 'home economics' into 'home technology'. 'Livelihood education' was introduced in the elementary grades and is a common subject for girls and boys. Some countries have invited school administrators to evaluate the curricula to root out gender bias and sexist language.

Some countries report on the introduction of separate classes for boys and girls in some areas. There are examples of activities to create an interest in technology among young girls, such as the introduction of summer courses in technology for girls in Sweden and Austria. In a pilot project in Sweden, girls are taught how to speak freely and to present their opinion while boys are taught to write and to listen. Experience has shown that equality must be mainstreamed in the teaching process in order to give boys and girls equal opportunities in education. Teachers and school managers must learn about different conditions for boys and girls at school so that they can take the necessary action to counteract prejudice and gender-related problems.

Some government have activated a number of instruments to promote gender awareness in education such as courses for teachers, development of teaching materials, experimental projects and training centres which focus on various actors including the girls

and their parents, teachers and administrators. In the United States, schools use federal funds to implement professional development programmes providing teachers with effective strategies for gender-fair, culturally-sensitive teaching.

A few countries have established national plans of action to promote greater equality in education. In Sweden, the long-term objective is that neither sex should constitute less than 40 percent of the students in any educational programme and that the proportion of female school leaders should be increased to at least 20 per cent during the first five-year period, a goal that was fully attained and exceeded by 35 percent by 1993. Since 1985, current education policy in Uganda is encouraging affirmative action in favour of women until gender balance is attained. This policy is being implemented in terms of enrolment in government institutions of higher learning.

Different forms of awareness raising programmes and pilot projects are being carried out. Australia has conducted information campaigns to increase girls awareness of the need for and advantages of continued education. Non-governmental organizations are playing a critical role in carrying out mass public campaigns for awareness raising. In some countries, special activities for girls have been organized in response to research that shows that girls seem to struggle and suffer more than boys as they move into adulthood. In the United States, the event "Take our daughters to Work Day" mobilized parents, educators, employers and other caring adults and millions of girls who participated in 1993 and 1994. Similar activities which challenge and prevent stereotyped career choices of girls have been organized in England, Scotland, Canada and New Zealand. Non-governmental organizations have also made contributions in form of scholarships and awards programmes for training assistance to women who need to upgrade their skills (especially single parents).

Many developing countries often lack basic equipment such as textbooks, classrooms, schools supply and struggle with absenteeism among teachers so that gender balanced curriculum development and the removal of bias from teacher training seem not to be an issue of the highest priority.

V. CONCLUSIONS

Findings from the national reports submitted for the second review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies indicate that important progress has been made in all fields of female education. Girls and women are motivated to study and continue their education throughout their life cycle. They face obstacles of access and cultural attitudes depending on the regions, countries or location within the country they live. Where the issue of access has been resolved, the quality of girls' education deserves further consideration. The challenge for the future is to build adapt education to the kind of society that will emerge in the future.

[1]Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Article 10.

[2]World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990

[3]Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10).

[4]United Nations, Commission on the Status of Women, Progress at the national, regional and international levels in the Implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, Report of the Secretary General, E/CN.6/1990/5, 22 November 1989.

[5]ECOSOC resolution 1990/15

[6]UNESCO, World Education Report, 1993

[7]Christopher Colclough, Under-enrolment and Low Quality in African Primary Schooling: Towards a Gender-sensitive Solution, 1994

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[9]ABEL, Educating Girls: Strategies to increase access, persistence and achievement, December 1991

[10]Frank Dall, Education and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: The challenge of implementation, Innocenti Occasional Papers, Child Rights Series, Number 4, November 1993

[11]Schultz, Paul T., Human Capital Investment in Women and Men, Macro and Micro Evidence of Economic Returns, San Francisco, California 1994

[12]World Declaration on Education for All and Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs, World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, Thailand, 5-9 March 1990

[13]Nelly P. Stromquist, Gender and Basic Education in International Development Cooperation, January 1994

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

prepared by*

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development - UNCTAD

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CONTENTS

EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES[1]

PREFACE

This note is part of a more comprehensive document entitled "Women in development in the least developed countries: Review of the implementation of national and international support measures" currently under preparation by the UNCTAD secretariat. The document will be presented to the Meeting of Experts on Women in Development in the Least Developed Countries planned for January 1995, which forms part of the preparations for the high-level meeting which will conduct the mid-term global review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, scheduled to take place from 25 September to 6 October 1995. The outcome of the Meeting of Experts will also serve as an input to the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, in respect of least developed countries' concerns.

This note contains a review of the current situation of female education and training in the least developed countries (LDCs), of the policies and measures which have been applied in this respect by the LDCs themselves and by the international community, and of the outstanding problems LDCs are facing in this area. It is meant to sensitize the Expert Meeting on Gender, Education and Training to LDCs' concerns, by providing information on the specific lessons from the past in LDCs: what is known and what has been achieved; as well as with regard to the present: what remains to be assessed and to be achieved. No attempt is made here to outline any proposals for strategic action for the future (as this will be part of the main outcome of the UNCTAD Meeting of Experts on Women in Development in the Least Developed Countries), but the specific recommendations of the high-level group of experts on these issues, which was convened as part of the preparations for the second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, as well as the related broad measures set out in the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference itself, are indicated in annex I.

As regards data and methods used in this note, information has been gathered both through desk research and replies to a questionnaire sent to the governments of the LDCs. Use was also made of studies and reports by key international organizations with substantial programmes in this field, as well as major donor countries and NGOs, which provided a basis for reviewing and assessing their activities to promote women in development in the LDCs. Three types of approach have been used in the analysis, namely: (i) gender-specific comparisons between the group of LDCs as a whole and all developing countries; (ii) comparisons among the LDCs regarding the women-specific indicators; and (iii) comparisons between the situation of men and women in individual LDCs. The lack of recent and reliable

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[1] The list of countries identified by the General Assembly as least developed countries currently includes: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia.

data on women in LDCs continues to be a major problem, however, and was encountered also in the course of preparing this note.

INTRODUCTION

1.   In addition to the crucial importance of literacy and numeracy skills in all sectors of economic activity, including agriculture and the rural informal sector, the social and private gains to be made from female education are numerous and are being more widely acknowledged. Among the benefits are the impact on health, population growth and labour productivity.[2] Research has revealed that an additional year of schooling for women reduces under-five mortality by up to 10 percent. Educated women tend also to stand up more for themselves. Studies from Bangladesh confirm that educated women communicate more with their husbands, are more involved in family decisions and tend to be more respected[3]. For women, the opportunity to exercise equal rights to education is a quintessential prerequisite for achieving full productive capacity and exercising equal rights to employment and political participation.

I. CURRENT SITUATION AND ISSUES CONCERNING WOMEN IN LDCs

A. *Literacy training*

2.   It is often said that educating a man means educating a person while educating a woman means educating a family. However, education is one of the crucial areas in which women have been discriminated against, and the situation is particularly worrisome in the LDCs. Whilst approximately half of all adult women in developing countries are literate compared to two thirds of adult men, only a little over one third of adult women and somewhat less than 60 per cent of adult men are literate in the LDCs. With few exceptions, the female adult literacy rate is about two thirds that of males in the LDCs. Only in Lesotho and Maldives are the female literacy rates higher than those of males, reaching levels as high as 85 per cent and 92 per cent respectively. The situation in Lesotho can be explained by the high enrolment rates (see para. 5). Seven other LDCs fare relatively well, with a recorded female literacy rate above 60 per cent; these are Botswana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Myanmar, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire and Zambia. (Data are for 1990, see annex II, table 1).

3.   The magnitude of the female literacy problem is strongly correlated with the amount of female poverty prevailing in LDCs. Cultural norms including the notion of "safety"[4] for women can at times constitute an additional obstacle, as shown by studies on Bangladesh and

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[2] See UNESCO, *Education for all, Status and Trends*, Paris, 1993.

[3] P. Smyre, *Women and Health*, (London, Zed Books Ltd., 1991) p.42.

[4] "Safety" is a notion linked to seclusion of women under certain cultural norms.

Nepal where parents, because of such norms and not so much because they cannot afford it, often refrain from sending daughters to school.[5]

B. *Primary education*

4.   Enrolment ratios are one measure of relative access to education. As can be seen from annex II, table 2, although progress has been registered in the majority of LDCs, ratios in these countries are considerably lower than for all developing countries, especially in the case of women.

5.   Annex II, table 2 shows that the countries where the gap between girls' and boys' primary enrolments remain remarkably large are Chad, Guinea and Yemen. In all these countries, the female/male enrolment ratio is less than half, i.e. less than 50 girls to every 100 boys were enrolled. Botswana, Lesotho and Maldives are exceptional cases where female enrolment ratios are higher than those for males (and also the highest among the LDCs). The high female participation in the first two countries is largely an outcome of the high migration rate of the male population, which has forced young boys to drop out of school at an early stage to attend the cattle because their fathers have gone off to work in South Africa. These boys seek wage employment in adolescence and thus do not have the opportunity to attend school.[6] In a number of LDCs which have been afflicted by internal political problems and instability, such as Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia and Zaire, significant drops in female enrolment ratios have been registered.

6.   It has to be borne in mind that data on school enrolments illustrate only one aspect of women's access to education. It is also of importance to look at the number of girls who manage to complete primary education. Data (only available for both genders combined) show wide differences in "net survival rates" which may vary for grade IV pupils between 20 per cent (Haiti) and 98 per cent (Botswana) in the LDCs. Less than half of the pupils finish grade IV in Bhutan, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Madagascar and Mozambique (see annex II, table 2). Because of the lower value placed by families on girls' as compared to boys' education, in the event when parents are forced to take a decision to withdraw their children from schooling for financial reasons, the decision often falls first on girls rather than boys. Studies of Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, the Gambia, Malawi, and Nepal have revealed that this decision is influenced by such considerations as the use of girls to help with looking after siblings, girls' household activities seeming to have a higher impact than boys' activities on the parents' earnings.[7] It is reported from Bangladesh that lack of transportation, absence

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[5]   See ESCAP, "Review and appraisal of implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women; regional priority issues and proposals for action: women in social development", document E/ESCAP/RND/SOCWD/2, 5 May 1994, p. 19.

[6]   J. Gay, "Women and development in Lesotho" (prepared for the United States Agency for International Development, Lesotho, 1982), mimeo.

[7]   B. Herz and others, "Letting girls learn: Promising approaches to primary and secondary education", *World Bank Discussion Paper No. 133*, Washington D.C., 1991.

of roads to schools, inaccessibility during monsoons, excessive pressure of domestic chores, and mothers' multiple pregnancies requiring help from female children cause girls to drop out in large numbers. Although text books are free, the disadvantaged families are unable to provide clothes and stationery, which are not free.[8] In Niger, the very high drop-out rate for girls is attributed to religious, cultural and traditional norms, social prejudices, early marriage, preference to keep girls at home, girls' contribution to domestic tasks and family income, distance from schools and training centres, preference of parents to invest more in boys' education, and more recently to the fact that graduate girls have not been able to find employment.[9]

C. *Secondary and post-secondary education*

7.   The female-male gap gets wider at the higher levels of education, where the enrolment ratios continue to be alarmingly low (12 per cent for female enrolment ratios at secondary level in LDCs as compared to 37 per cent in all developing countries in 1991 (see annex II, table 2). Lesotho and Botswana are, among the LDCs, the countries where women have reached higher average gross enrolment ratios at secondary level, even higher than those of men (which is similar to the case of primary education). In Botswana, however, the drop-out rate is a cause for serious concern, most of it concerning girls, of which about 80 per cent is estimated to be due to teenage pregnancy.[10]

8.   Enrolments at post-secondary level are, with some notable exceptions, even less favourable to women. The tertiary female enrolment ratio in LDCs has been estimated at only 1 percent (41 percent of that of males) as compared to 6 percent in all developing countries combined. Lesotho and Myanmar are the only exceptions where the average gross enrolment of women at post-secondary level surpasses that of men. This reflects probably a more favourable attitude to female education on the part of higher income families that can afford the cost of tertiary education, as well as a tendency to send boys abroad for post-secondary education (because of lack of universities in the country), whereas even the families willing to ensure higher education for girls would be reluctant to send them abroad. In three other countries, Afghanistan, Botswana and Madagascar, the female-male ratio is over 80 per cent in post-secondary education.

9.   Generally, the number of women students in technical and engineering and medical colleges is proportionally lower than that of male students but tends to be higher in such fields as teacher training. This situation is reflected in a survey carried out in 1990-91 in the northern governorates of Yemen, where the vast majority of parents stated that they felt education was important for both boys and girls, but for different reasons: boys should

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[8] Information from the reply by the Government of Bangladesh to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[9] Information from the reply by the Government of Niger to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[10] Republic of Botswana, *Planning for People: Strategy for Accelerated Human Development in Botswana,* Gaborone, 1993, p. 36.

prepare for work outside the home while education would prepare girls to be better home-makers, but could also help them work as teachers, nurses or even physicians.[11]

10. A final problem relates to the content of education. It is on the content of education curricula and the nature of training provided that the prospects of gainful employment opportunities for women depend. Because it is felt that women's primary role is in the domestic sphere, women not only have fewer years of schooling as indicated above, but their studies are concentrated in non-tertiary areas and areas perceived as "feminine". Education, however, not only opens up women's access to professional life and gives them the means to cope with it, it is also a precondition for enabling them to cope with the improvement of their social life and status and that of their children. Accordingly, education should include adequate and appropriate information conducive to informed, responsible decision-making concerning health, sexual and reproductive behaviour, family life and patterns of production and consumption.[12]

II. EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S SITUATION IN LDCs

11. In the 1990s, one of the major global events in the field of education was the World Conference on Education for All, held at Jomtien, Thailand in 1990. The Declaration on Education for All, adopted at that conference, called for new ways of thinking about education and for support for new modalities of aid cooperation and new strategies for making assistance more effective, as well as ensuring that an appropriate amount of resources is allocated to each of the components. The "Framework for Action to Meet Basic Learning Needs" includes a series of tasks for countries, NGOs and the international community. At the national level, countries would have to determine the intermediate goals and targets for "Education for All" and to design a plan of action for achieving them, while at the international level action would be needed to help countries meet their targets.

12. LDCs, more than any other group of countries, are highly dependent on external assistance for the implementation of their plans and programmes. On the whole, official development finance (ODF) from countries members of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and multilateral agencies mainly financed by them, which represents the bulk of external financing of the LDCs, has stagnated during the 1990s. Moreover, aid for education purposes still represents a very moderate part of total ODF to the LDCs, but it has been increasing in recent years. The share of aid for education, out of the total ODF commitments of DAC members, grew from 2.5 per cent in 1987 to 4.8 per cent in 1991. This is in tandem with aid given for education to all developing countries, which increased from 2.8 per cent to 4.9 per cent during this period (see annex II, table 3). The importance of education to development has encouraged the World Bank, under its lending for human resources development, to commit resources largely to education and its focus has been

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[11] UNICEF, *The Situation of Children and Women in the Republic of Yemen*, Sana'a, Yemen, 1993.

[12] The programme of action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development in September 1994 elaborates on these points (see in particular chapters IV and XI).

towards development of basic education. Strategies to target girls and women, the poor and disadvantaged groups now guide its education operations. According to the World Bank, in fiscal year 1993, two out of three of the Bank's education projects have been directed towards women in development but data on the specific share of such projects in LDCs are unfortunately not available.

13.   As regards efforts at the national level, available data for over two thirds of the LDCs show that the share of public expenditure devoted to education varies widely in LDCs, but in most of them it has been relatively low. Thus only eight LDCs (Botswana, Cape Verde, Haiti, Lesotho, Mauritania, Rwanda, Togo and Yemen) had shares above 19 per cent in 1991. At the other extreme were six LDCs (Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Solomon Islands and Zambia) with shares below 10 per cent. The situation is particularly critical in Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau and Zambia, since they are finding it difficult to increase enrolment ratios in primary education (see annex II, tables 1 and 2). Expenditure on education relative to GNP also varies substantially among countries and over time, ranging from below 2 per cent (Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti and Sierra Leone) to over 6 per cent (Botswana, Kiribati, Lesotho, Maldives and Mozambique). In the following paragraphs, some examples of country-level policies and measures with which education of women has been promoted in the LDCs will be discussed.

14.   The current overall policy in education followed by Uganda is exemplary in promoting women's education. This policy encourages positive discrimination in favour of women until a gender balance is attained. It is implemented in enrolment in government institutions of higher learning (see also section C). The government has also adopted a positive discrimination policy in vocational training centres whereby females are admitted with lower passes than males and many are taken as part-time students. This policy is combined with a policy proposal to introduce compulsory education for all age children.[13]

A. Literacy training, mass education, non-formal education

15.   In order to come to terms with the huge numbers of people requiring both formal and non-formal primary education and even basic literacy training, the Government of Bangladesh has launched a special mass education programme for age groups 15 to 45 years. This programme is to be implemented through a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations. The women's share, however, is small; in mass literacy centres, for instance, they have represented only 2.2 per cent of the participants.[14]

16.   Support to non-formal education is another crucial area for women's development in LDCs, and one that can be combined with literacy training. Non-formal courses are generally in functional literacy where basic literacy and numeracy are taught. They are usually combined with training in practical skills, civic education and family health education. In several LDCs (such as Bangladesh) they may also incorporate a scheme for the creation of employment and a savings and credit scheme. In Niger, a special service has been set up to

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[13] Information from the reply by the Government of Uganda to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[14] Information from the reply by the Government of Bangladesh to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

promote functional literacy classes in the urban and rural areas by holding them at maternal-child centres and female hostels. There are female hostels in the major areas which conduct programmes on literacy, child care, hygiene, elementary management and sewing. They attract mainly illiterate girls and women and female school drop-outs. However, it seems that, on the whole, participation of women is not too encouraging as the timing of the programmes is not convenient for them and many are unable to attend. In some cases, husbands do not approve of their wives' attendance. Older and married women also shun these centres where the majority are young girls.[15] In Bhutan UNICEF is supporting a non-formal education programme involving young girls and women and their families, imparting knowledge on health, nutrition, sanitation, hygiene and income generation. In Guinea-Bissau, based on priority actions identified in the National Programme for Education (to the year 2000) which was endorsed at a sectoral consultation of donors in January 1993, a number of international organizations are developing or have developed complementary and mutually supportive programme activities, particularly in the area of women's literacy, civic education and family life education.

B. *Primary education*

17.   A number of suggestions have been made on how to improve access to education for girls. In many LDCs, where the provision of education is limited, schools tend to reserve places for boys rather than girls, although reserving places for girls could increase their enrolment. Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania have, however, both pursued policies of reserving places for girls. Another option is to reduce the distance to schools by providing classes closer to home, for example in a house or a free room in the community. In Bhutan, for instance, the Government has created extended classrooms, which provide the early primary grades at locations around the local primary school. Parents who are unwilling to let their daughters attend the primary school due to the distance are thus encouraged to enrol them in complementary schools closer by. In Bangladesh, primary education was made compulsory in 1992, and in order to encourage education of girls, their schooling has been made free up to class VIII.[16]

18.   Bangladesh has, moreover, had much success with its NGO-provided "satellite schools". As part of the Non-formal Primary Education Programme, introduced in 1983 by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, these schools provide a service that is tailor-made for the communities they serve. Classes are held for two and a half hours a day, so as not to interfere too much with household and other chores and during harvest seasons the timing is altered to permit harvesting activities. The purpose of the schools is to prepare students (60 per cent girls) who would otherwise be unable to attend school to go on to fourth grade in the formal primary schools. The teachers, mainly female, are recruited from villages, and given the necessary training by professionals. Distance-learning or correspondence courses are yet another possibility, and have been tried in Bangladesh, Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania (for teacher training).[17]

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[15]   Information from the reply by the Government of Niger to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[16]   Information from the reply by the Government of Bangladesh to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[17]   UNCTAD, *The Least Developed Countries 1993-1994 Report*, p. 129.

19.   When conditions are propitious, such as having educated and aware parents, and the availability of female teachers in all-girls' classes in schools within walking distance of home, female enrolments tend to be high. In Yemen, this is reflected in the situation in some urban areas, where girls make up half of primary school enrolments. However, the number of women teachers in rural areas of Yemen has been increasing at a slow rate (in 1987, there were no female rural teachers in the northern governorates, in 1990 there were 78, and another 200 were under training). The present policy of encouraging women teachers to move from urban to rural areas has not been working, and very few rural women were able to go to cities to be trained as teachers. A World Bank project was launched to increase the number of female teachers, especially in rural areas, through the provision of new schools, trained women teachers, and books and other teaching materials. The project has initially focused on rural towns and large villages where women teachers can work near home, and where there is sufficient demand for schooling among young girls.[18]

20.   Also in Bangladesh, attempts are being made by the Government to increase the number of female teachers, which is illustrated by the decision, contained in the fourth five-year plan (1990-1995), to fill up to 60 per cent of vacancies by females.[19] Within the first two years of the plan, the number of female teachers in primary schools went up by over 20 per cent. Increasing the number of female teachers provides girls with role models and also reassures the parents about sending their daughters to school.

21.   Improving the school facilities, making the curriculum more relevant and providing separate toilets are other ways of overcoming parents' reluctance to send girls to school. Scholarships reduce the direct costs of education; if they were provided for girls, parents might have less excuse to choose between educating their sons and their daughters.

C. *Secondary, post-secondary and adult education*

22.   In Botswana, in an effort to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in the educational system, the Ministry of Education allows students who have dropped out to be readmitted. After giving birth, a girl student can apply to re-enter after two years. There are, however, a number of implementation problems regarding this policy, basically because there is no guarantee of readmission as priority is given to first-time enrolment, and because the policy is not well known by teenage mothers themselves. The two-year waiting period also serves as a sort of "punishment" for girls.[20]

23.   In Uganda, where the female/male ratio among university students is one to five, extra points are given to women in the entrance examinations. This measure, which was first implemented during the academic year 1990/91 has already contributed to increasing numbers of female students. In the same year, moreover, the Makerere University started a Women's

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Information from the reply by the Government of Bangladesh to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

[20] Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Republic of Botswana, *Planning for People: Strategy for Accelerated Human Development in Botswana*, Gaborone, 1993, p. 35.

Studies Department in the Faculty of Social Sciences, as a direct result of the United Nations Decade for Women. Two NGOs joined the efforts and pressed for the new programme.[21]

24.   Adult education for girls has received little attention in the LDCs, where the basic education needs are largely not met. In some countries such as Bangladesh and the United Republic of Tanzania, an adult education centre is set up to give opportunities to adults who wish to improve themselves by taking specialized courses conducted in the evenings or by correspondence.

D. *Technical training for women*

25.   In the light of the need for skilled labour in technical as well as commercial work, vocational training takes on a special significance in LDCs. In most cases, programmes of systematic vocational training are underdeveloped or even non-existent, in contrast to other developing countries where various forms of on-the-job or school-based vocational training enhance skills in the formal and informal sectors. Furthermore, vocational training for women continues to be confined to traditional feminine areas such as sewing and teaching, whereas women are less visible in agriculture and technical institutes.

26.   Many LDCs (e.g. Maldives, Sierra Leone, Uganda) suffer, moreover, from a serious shortage of high and middle level manpower (professional, managerial and technical), a fact that is strongly related to low income and wages. Lack of adequate remuneration has also led to high levels of migration of educated and skilled manpower in the case of a good number of LDCs. In addition, high illiteracy rates, low skills development and lack of access to capital and appropriate technology, have constrained productive activities. The employment situation, moreover, has grown worse in the 1990s in a number of countries, such as Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania, due to public sector retrenchment associated with structural adjustment programmes. The unfavourable employment situation in LDCs has affected both men and women. However, the latter have probably confronted greater problems in view of, *inter alia*, the general bias in favour of male employment.

27.   In Bangladesh, under various extension services and training programmes of the Department of Women's Affairs, rural girls and women are being trained in skill development, management, entrepreneurship and leadership pertaining to women's participation in income-generating activities. According to the data provided by the Government[22], there are two agricultural training centres for women as well as the National Women's Training and Development Academy, which has 30 branches at district and lower levels. These offer infrastructural facilities for providing vocational training to women in different disciplines, including even such non-traditional subjects as electronics, mechanics and shoe-making, besides the more traditional sewing, secretarial work, embroidery, batik, etc.

28.   A large project has, moreover, been carried out in Bangladesh with the technical and financial assistance of UNDP and ILO on "Training of village women in management skills

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[21] United Nations, CEDAW/C/UGA/1-2, 1992, pp. 19, 41.

[22] Information from the reply by the Government of Bangladesh to the UNCTAD questionnaire.

for their self-employment and income-generating activities". The project commenced in 1988 and terminated in 1992, and was able to conduct 1,199 courses for 61,700 village women and 317 rural educators, motivators and co-trainers. The project, moreover, directly benefited the implementing NGO (Swanirvar Bangladesh) by strengthening the organization and management ability of the field staff and leaders to deliver services more effectively to the solidarity groups for grass-roots women. Many of the trained women have become potential entrepreneurs in agriculture and cottage craft-related trades for income generation and self-employment.[23]

29.   Non-formal training of trainers is also increasingly undertaken, especially training of para-medics and para-legals. Lesotho, for example, has embarked on training groups for women as community health workers under its Primary Health Care Programme and the Federation of Women's Lawyers has started training para-legals to disseminate information.

IV. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

30.   Available indicators show that, despite progress made, the situation of LDCs in regard to education and training of women is considerably worse than that of other groups of countries and on the whole the gender gap is greater. Not enough of LDCs' aid is being allocated to education in general and the proportion of public expenditure spent on education in LDCs is equally very small. This has often to do with the stringent economic reforms which most LDCs have been undertaking under structural adjustment. Moreover, promoting women's education has intensified only recently, as a result of the democratization process under way in many LDCs. In many cases, certain cultural and traditional norms tend to hamper women's empowerment: the unfavourable attitude towards education for women in a patrilineal society as well as those norms which dictate the seclusion of women remain strong adverse factors.

31.   On the other hand, the situation of women and their educational problems and needs have been highlighted during the United Nations Decade for Women and at major conferences, including the World Conference on Education for All, the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Earth Summit and the United Nations Conference on Population and Development, as well as in many expert group meetings. These conferences and meetings have drawn the attention of the international community to the importance of these issues and have led to the elaboration of internationally agreed plans of action and specific measures to enhance women's access to education including specifically in the LDCs (see annex I). While most measures needed have been identified, the question is more how to find the necessary financial, technical and institutional means to implement them, and how to persuade LDC governments and donors alike to give adequate priority to educating girls and women. Attention must also be given to devising innovative approaches to sensitizing people and local communities, to raise additional resources and to reduce administrative and other overhead costs of implementing programmes and projects.

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[23] ILO, *People's Republic of Bangladesh:- Training of Village Women in Management Skills for their Self-employment and Income-Generating Activities - Project Findings and Recommendations*, 1993. BDG/85/220.

Agreed recommendations in respect of Education and Training for Women in LDCs

I.   **Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s**

The Programme of Action for the LDCs for the 1990s adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the LDCs in Paris (September, 1990) calls for the full participation of women in the development process, *inter-alia*, through, better access to education and training (para.72). In its para.73, it is stated that the development and mobilization of women would greatly enhance the development prospects of their countries, particularly in such areas as "encouraging the media and various systems of education to convey information giving a realistic and positive image of women". In the section on "Education and Training", the LDCs are requested to make sustained efforts "to stop and reverse the progressive erosion affecting the education sector and renew their commitment to combatting illiteracy, particularly among women ... Special emphasis has to be given to improved access for girls and women to education activities" (para.80).

II.   **High-level Experts' Meeting on the Role of Women in the Development of the Least Developed Countries**

The Report of the High-level Experts' Meeting, held in Niamey (January 1990) preparatory to the Second United Nations Conference on the LDCs, contains sections on training and on formal education identifying major constraints encountered by women in LDCs and including a number of recommendations to cope with those constraints. These two sections are reproduced below[22]:

" A.   Training

(1)   Situational problem

11.   Several factors have been responsible for the high illiteracy rates among women. They include cultural and traditional practices. Another factor is limited resources available within the household; in this respect, preference is given to boys' education as opposed to girls'.

12.   Illiteracy, lack of information and inadequate training are inhibiting factors for women in their efforts to participate at various levels as equal partners and beneficiaries in development. Training therefore is required in order to achieve the following:

(a)   Improve the quality of life;

(b)   Increase knowledge, skills and aptitude;

(c)   Improve productivity and increase income;

(d)   Promote participation in decision-making.

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[22] From document UNCLDC II/5 dated 16 March 1990.

13.   In fact, training and consciousness-raising are vital for empowering women and raising their capacities as full participants in the development of their countries.

(2)   Recommendations

Action at the national level

14.   Training should be tackled from all angles and, to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the training of trainers would form part of the preparatory activities. Efforts should be made to increase the number of women trainers as they are more sensitive to women's problems and also because women may wish to deal with female interlocutors. Categories that required training, other than the teachers of trainees, would include:

(a)   Young women drop-outs who need vocational and technical skills for self-employment; they would also require an integrated body of knowledge and information;

(b)   Women who have been bypassed in the formal system of education; depending on their background and circumstances, functional literacy and numeracy should form part of their training package;

(c)   Professional women who may require further training, to develop their capacities.

15.   Training would require a body of integrated knowledge and information that would address the multifaceted issues of development, such as health, agriculture, horticulture, legal rights, productivity, managerial skills and a wide range of awareness creation. Types of training required for the illiterate and semi-literate categories would include: training in functional literacy and numeracy, home management, environmental conservation, health, nutrition and hygiene, food preservation and processing, decision-making, family life education, motivation for achievement, water sanitation, functional literacy.

16.   The Meeting stressed the need to link training needs to employment opportunities and to provide adequate financial resources for training.

Action at the international level

17.   United Nations agencies, international NGOs and bilateral donors could specifically help with the following:

(a)   Establishment of training centres at various levels, including centres for grass-roots trainers;

(b)   Development of professional trainers through better utilization of current training centres within LDCs, with emphasis on the development of integrated programmes;

(c)   Design of special training sessions and of study tours to neighbouring countries, with a view to promoting the capacities of women professionals and the formation of women experts capable of undertaking the responsibilities of policy direction, planning, monitoring and evaluation processes in different fields;

(d) Development of appropriate curricula for various areas of training, aimed in particular at raising the quality of life of the rural population.

B. Formal education

(1) Situational problem

18. Since formal education for women is a prerequisite to successful social and economic development of the LDCs, all efforts must be made to identify those factors that enhance and/or inhibit women's education, with a view to accelerating the benefits of enhancing factors and removing the inhibiting ones. In particular, the Meeting noted that there were still very few women in important senior positions, restricted for holders of higher academic qualifications. Such positions related to professions which conferred distinction and recognition and which could influence policy decisions or attract high financial remuneration.

(2) Constraints

19. Despite the increase in the enrolment of females in schools, the review showed that in most LDCs the higher the level in the educational system, the fewer the number of females represented. This was attributed to female drop-out rates. Certain cultural factors adversely affected female participation in higher level education. Increasing rates of teenage pregnancy and early marriage were factors that impeded women's access to education. In the light of the above, constraints on female education may be summarized as follows:

(a) Early pregnancy;

(b) Early marriage;

(c) Social pressure;

(d) Poverty in the household;

(e) De facto discrimination by sex;

(f) Long distances to and from schools;

(g) Negative attitudes;

(h) The use of the female child to assist in domestic labour.

(3) Measures to address the constraints

20. The Meeting proposed the following measures to overcome the obstacles:

Action at the national level

(a) There should be adequate budgetary allocations for education with specific allocation for female students at all levels. This budgetary effort could be achieved by:

- Cutting down on the arms budget to supplement that of education;

- Launching educational investment schemes;

- Reducing the period of training in schools;

(b) Free and compulsory education should be provided for girls at the primary and middle schools level, as a means to eliminate financial constraints in educating girls;

(c) It is necessary to raise awareness with regard to:

- Family life education and family planning;

- Legal marriage age;

- Implications of certain adverse traditional and cultural practices;

- Changes in attitude.

(d) Financial resources devoted to primary level education should be increased;

(e) Non-stereotyped curricula geared towards employment should be developed.

Action at the international level

(a) UNESCO and other multilateral donors should give special attention and financial support to LDC to make them realize their objectives of literacy eradication and primary education for all during the decade. There should be special budgetary allocations for the education of women;

(b) NGOs should be encouraged to go further into the field of literacy and education for girls".

Annex II

Statistical tables

Table 1. Indicators on literacy and public expenditure on education in LDCs

Country	Adult literacy rate % 1990 a — M	F	T	Expenditure on education as a percentage of: GDP b — 1985 c	1991 c	Total public expenditure — 1985 c	1991 c
Afghanistan	44	14	29	..	..	4.0	..
Bangladesh	47	22	35	1.9	2.0	9.7	10.3
Benin	32	16	23	..	..	..	..
Bhutan	51	25	38	4.0	4.9	11.5	10.7
Botswana	84	65	74	5.0	8.1	17.7	21.0
Burkina Faso	28	9	18	2.0	2.3	21.0	17.5
Burundi	61	40	50	2.5	3.6	15.5	17.7
Cambodia	48	22	35	..	..	..	..
Cape Verde	..	..	67	3.6	4.1	..	19.9
Central African Rep.	52	25	38	2.6	2.8	16.8	..
Chad	42	18	30	..	2.3	..	--
Comoros	49	35	42	6.5	..	13.2	..
Djibouti	49	35	42	2.7	3.5	7.5	11.1
Equatorial Guinea	64	37	50	1.7	..	..	..
Ethiopia	70	35	55	4.3	4.9	9.5	9.4
Gambia	39	16	27	3.2	2.7	..	12.9
Guinea	35	13	24	..	1.7	15.3	6.8
Guinea-Bissau	50	24	37	..	1.4	10.2	2.7
Haiti	59	47	53	1.2	1.8	16.5	20.0
Kiribati	..	..	..	..	6.8	18.5	14.8
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	92	76	84	0.4	..	4.5	–
Lesotho	62	85	74	7.4	12.9	..	21.9
Liberia	50	29	40	4.5	..	16.5	–
Madagascar	88	73	80	2.9	2.6	..	17.2
Malawi	52	31	28	3.5	3.4	9.6	10.3
Maldives	91	92	91	..	8.4	12.0	11.3
Mali	41	24	32	3.4	..	9.1	..
Mauritania	46	27	36	..	4.7	..	22.0
Mozambique	45	21	33	3.1	6.3	10.6	12.0
Myanmar	89	72	81	1.9	2.7	11.7	17.4
Nepal	38	13	26	2.2	2.0	12.1	11.0
Niger	20	17	28	..	3.1	..	9.0
Rwanda	64	37	50	3.2	4.2	25.1	25.4
Samoa	..	..	..	..	5.3	..	10.7
Sao Tome & Principe	76	47	60	4.3	..	..	–
Sierra Leone	31	11	21	2.4	1.3	12.4	13.3
Solomon Islands	..	..	..	4.7	5.1	12.4	7.9
Somalia	36	14	24	0.5	..	4.1	..
Sudan	43	12	27	..	..	..	..
Togo	56	31	43	5.0	5.7	19.4	24.7
Tuvalu	..	..	..	--	..	..	16.2
Uganda	62	35	48	3.1	--	..	..
Un. Rep. of Tanzania	89	83	87	3.5	5.8	14.0	11.4
Vanuatu	..	..	..	6.7	5.6	22.7	12.6
Yemen	53	26	39	5.8	..	20.8	19.2
Zaire	84	61	72	1.0	..	7.3	--
Zambia	81	65	73	4.6	2.9	13.4	8.7
All LDCs d	59	36	48	..	--	..	--

Source: UNESCO, Compendium of Statistics on Illiteracy - 1990 Edition;
Statistical Yearbook 1993; World Bank World Development Report 1994;
UNDP, Human Development Report 1994;
and IMF, Government Finance Statistics, Yearbooks 1992 and 1993.

Note: Public expenditure includes subsidies for private education
but excludes expenditure financed by foreign aid.

a Estimates and projections.

b Or GNP.

c Or neighbouring year.

d Average of countries for which data are available.

Table 2. Indicators on education in LDCs

	School enrolment ratios (% of relevant age group)												Female:male ratios 1991 a			Survival rate of Grade IV 1991
	1985 a						1991 a									
	Primary		Secondary		Post-secondary		Primary		Secondary		Post-secondary					
Country	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	F	T	P	S	PS	
Afghanistan	13	20	6	9	0.5	1.7	17	24	6	9	1.0	1.6	53	55	91	89
Bangladesh	52	64	10	17	2.2	5.6	71	77	12	19	1.3	3.8	86	48	22	52
Benin	45	68	10	18	0.8	2.7	39	58	7	12	0.7	2.8	50	41	15	56
Bhutan	19	26	1	4	0.1	0.3	19	25	2	5	0.1	0.2	61	29	33	37
Botswana	112	108	32	30	1.3	2.2	121	119	57	54	2.9	3.3	104	114	81	98
Burkina Faso	21	29	3	5	0.3	0.6	29	37	5	8	0.3	0.7	63	50	27	82
Burundi	44	52	2	4	0.3	0.6	63	70	4	6	0.4	0.8	82	57	36	85
Cambodia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cape Verde	111	113	11	13	..	..	113	115	19	19	..	..	97	95	..	91
Central African Rep.	58	76	8	16	0.3	1.2	52	68	7	12	0.7	1.8	61	41	23	72
Chad	24	43	2	6	0.1	0.5	41	65	3	7	0.1	0.5	46	25	11	78
Comoros	71	82	22	28	..	..	68	75	15	17	..	..	83	75	..	51
Djibouti	34	41	10	13	..	..	37	44	12	15	..	..	71	67	..	..
Equatorial Guinea	133	149	4	13	1.1	5.2	120	121	11	23	1.1	5.2	98	31	12	..
Ethiopia	28	36	9	12	0.3	0.7	21	25	11	12	0.3	0.8	72	85	23	50
Gambia	52	68	10	16	..	..	56	68	12	18	..	..	69	50	..	97
Guinea	22	34	7	13	0.6	2.1	24	37	5	10	0.3	1.4	48	33	12	69
Guinea-Bissau	43	61	4	7	0.1	0.5	42	60	4	7	0.1	0.3	55	44	17	41
Haiti	91	97	17	18	0.6	1.0	54	56	21	22	0.6	1.2	93	95	35	20
Kiribati	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Lao People's Dem. Rep.	100	110	19	23	1.2	1.7	84	98	17	22	0.9	1.3	75	63	50	..
Lesotho	125	113	27	23	1.8	1.6	116	107	30	26	2.9	2.7	120	143	116	73
Liberia	28	40	12	22	1.3	2.3	25	35	9	16	1.2	2.5	56	41	32	..
Madagascar	113	117	28	31	3.2	4.2	91	92	18	18	3.1	3.4	98	100	82	42
Malawi	52	60	3	4	0.4	0.6	60	66	3	4	0.4	0.7	83	60	33	65
Maldives	139	146	5	4	..	..	142	142	44	44	..	..	101	98	..	..
Mali	17	23	4	7	0.2	1.0	19	25	5	7	0.2	0.8	59	50	14	61
Mauritania	39	49	8	15	0.9	3.5	48	55	10	14	1.0	3.3	76	53	18	78
Mozambique	76	87	5	7	0.1	0.1	53	63	5	8	0.1	0.1	74	50	50	39
Myanmar	96	99	19	22	4.5	4.4	100	104	23	24	5.6	4.9	93	92	137	..
Nepal	51	82	12	26	1.1	3.0	54	82	17	30	3.3	6.6	50	40	34	..
Niger	18	26	3	5	0.1	0.3	21	29	4	7	0.2	0.7	57	44	17	90
Rwanda	63	64	5	6	0.1	0.4	70	71	7	8	0.2	0.6	97	78	20	68
Samoa	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sao Tome & Principe	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Sierra Leone	49	60	13	20	0.7	1.8	39	48	12	16	0.5	1.5	70	57	20	..
Solomon Islands	71	78	..	..	..	..	98	104	15	19	..	..	89	63	..	..
Somalia	14	19	4	8	0.2	0.8	8	11	5	7	0.9	2.3	53	56	24	54
Sudan	41	50	17	20	1.5	2.0	43	50	20	22	2.3	2.9	77	80	68	82
Togo	71	93	10	21	0.7	2.1	87	111	12	23	0.7	2.6	65	34	15	67
Tuvalu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Uganda	43	50	3	5	0.4	0.8	64	71	8	12	0.6	1.1	82	50	38	81
Un. Rep. of Tanzania	74	75	2	3	0.1	0.3	68	69	4	5	0.1	0.3	97	67	25	88
Vanuatu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yemen	32	70	5	15	0.7	1.3	43	79	10	29	1.5	..	39	21	40	80
Zaire	68	87	13	23	0.5	1.7	64	76	15	24	0.6	1.7	74	47	21	77
Zambia	94	100	13	18	0.6	1.5	92	97	14	20	1.1	2.0	91	56	37	91
All LDCs	54	65	10	15	1.3	2.6	58	66	12	17	1.4	2.4	79	58	41	–
All developing countries b	90	99	31	38	4.6	6.1	91	99	37	43	5.6	7.2	87	76	64	–

Source: UNESCO, *Statistical Yearbook 1993* and *Trends and Projections of Enrolment by Level of of Education and by Age, 1960-2025* (as assessed in 1993).

a Or neighbouring year.

b As defined in UNESCO, *Statistical Yearbook 1993*.

Table 3. Commitments by DAC members of official development finance for social sectors and infrastructure

(Percentage of total ODF)[a]

Sector		1987	1988	1989	1990	1991
1. Education	LDCs	2.5	3.2	4.0	4.6	4.8
	All DCs	2.8	2.8	3.2	3.5	4.9
2. Health	LDCs	2.9	2.6	2.6	2.9	6.6
	All DCs	1.6	2.0	2.0	2.6	3.0
3. Water, sanitation and sewage	LDCs	3.9	4.4	4.4	4.4	5.8
	All DCs	4.0	3.1	3.7	4.4	4.0
4. Other social	LDCs	4.3	5.1	4.8	5.8	7.5
	All DCs	5.5	4.9	4.9	8.0	7.9
Total (1-4)	LDCs	13.6	15.3	15.9	17.7	24.7
	All DCs	13.9	12.7	13.9	18.5	19.7
Memo item:						
Programme aid	LDCs	16.3	13.9	9.5	9.2	12.1
	All DCs	16.3	13.7	13.8	16.7	13.5

Source: OECD/DAC Creditor Reporting System.

a   ODF comprises ODA plus non-concessional multilateral aid flows and bilateral other flows. This last item consists principally of official export credits, official sector and portfolio investment and non-concessional debt reorganization. See *Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries 1988-1991* (Paris: OECD, 1993), p.322. For LDCs the share of non-ODA in total ODF is very small.

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EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR REFUGEE GIRLS AND WOMEN

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Education and training for refugee girls and women

Introduction

There are about 16 million refugees in the world, and perhaps as many again internally displaced persons and returnees. About half of these uprooted persons are female, and about half of the females are girls. This paper looks at the educational situation of refugee girls and women, more specifically at the nearly 4 million girls and women in refugee populations assisted by UNHCR in Third World countries. (Statistics here and elsewhere refer to 1993.)

Not all refugee students are supported by UNHCR. Some refugee children enrol in schools in the country of asylum without assistance from UNHCR, while others attend refugee schools organised by independently-funded international or national NGOs or refugee organisatons. The total number of refugee children whose schooling is funded by UNHCR throughout the world is about 613,623, comprising some 388,805 boys and some 224,818 girls; namely, 37% girls.

This paper is focussed on the over 7 million UNHCR-assisted refugees in Third World countries. Of the 496,238 primary and secondary school children among this population, some 170,810 or 34% are girls. In the Third World as a whole (national populations), the proportion of schoolchildren who are girls is some 44%. Does this mean that there is a bias against girls in the UNHCR-funded refugee education system? A closer look at the statistics indicates that female participation in refugee education is closely related to previous participation patterns in the country of origin (see Part I below).

There are, however, a range of special policy issues relating to refugee education. In the first place, there is a need to suddenly produce an education system, for a newly arrived population suffering from the stress that produced displacement and the strange experience of being refugees. Current thinking is that rapid educational response can help alleviate this stress. The emergency response phase may lead on to a 'care and maintenance' phase, and finally to a durable solution: voluntary repatriation, local settlement or resettlement. Decisions on everything from school accommodation, to the use of curricula from the country of origin or asylum (or a mixture), to the design of vocational training programmes, depend on the probabilities of the alternative possible durable solutions, and especially the estimated time before voluntary repatriation can take place in safety and dignity.

One key policy issue in designing a refugee education programme is how to use the relative physical accessibility of refugee populations, and the presence of humanitarian organisations, to promote educational opportunities for girls and women. Some suggestions in this respect are offered below.

This paper is divided into two parts. Part I presents some qualitative aspects of refugee education for girls and women; beginning with constraints to female participation that are similar to those in the country of origin and continuing with other constraints; noting also a few positive features of the situation. Policy and programme options to improve participation and relevance are then reviewed. Part I concludes with some specific recommendations. Part II provides a statistical profile of UNHCR-funded education programmes, including a gender analysis.

Part I: Issues and recommendations

In this section we examine constraints on the educational participation of refugee girls and women; beginning with constraints which were already experienced in the countries of origin. Constraints particular to the refugee situation as well as certain positive features (in educational terms) of this situation are then reviewed. Policy and programmatic issues which arise in the design of refugee education and training programmes are next considered, leading on to some key recommendations for future action.

Problems similar to those in the country of origin

Cultural constraints

It would be easy to condemn UNHCR and other organisations serving refugees for low enrolment patterns among refugee women. One must first examine the culture of the nation and regions from which the refugees have come. During the 1980s, Afghan refugee girls and women outnumbered refugee females from any other country. However, it was partly to avoid the enforced attendance of girls at modern schools that the rural Afghans fought a 'jihad' and went into exile in the first place! The 3 million refugees in camps in Pakistan were mostly Pushtoon, a group which predominated in the Eastern Provinces of Afghanistan, and which has a cultural code requiring females to stay within the family circle for the years between early childhood and becoming a respected elder. Thus in 1979, on the eve of the Soviet invasion, 98% of rural Afghan women were illiterate (as compared to 74% of rural men). Only 18% of primary school students in Afghanistan were girls, as were 22% of students at secondary level; and most of these female students would have been in Kabul or other large cities. (All statistics relating to national education statistics have been taken from the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook, 1993.)

The percentages of illiteracy among women in other countries from which today's refugees originate include 86% in Somalia, 71% in Liberia, and 79% in Mozambique. The proportion of girls among the primary school students of these countries were 34%, 35% and 42% respectively (1991 figures).

Obviously, conservative interpretations of Islam account for some of these statistics; in such societies there is no cultural incentive for secular schooling and there is a belief that girls even approaching puberty should stay within the family circle. Moreover, there is a belief that any schooling for girls should be provided by female teachers, a condition which is difficult to meet in rural areas. The culture makes it difficult for a female teacher to leave her own family and reside elsewhere.

Arrangements whereby girls are betrothed at an early age can also affect schooling. Afghan parents often stated that daughters were betrothed at the age of 8 or so, and that thereafter they were expected to stay home and study housekeeping skills with their mothers so that they would make good wives.

Other general constraints

As has been widely documented, attendance of girls is hampered by parental poverty, since girls can help their mothers with their work from an early age, if only by looking after the youngest children to free their mothers' hands. Moreover, school attendance entails cash expenditures, on clothing, school books, writing materials, etc., and boys will have preference in this respect as they may increase their lifetime earning power more from study than might girls. Poverty also creates special problems for girls over the age of puberty. It will be noted that many of the countries from which there have been major refugee exoduses are at the bottom of the world's league table for GNP per capita, meaning that the concept of schooling for girls had had little chance to take root and that few girls from rural areas would have become teachers.

Conditions specific to the refugee situation

One aspect of the refugee situation is that populations that were once scattered and relatively inaccessible in their home country may be concentrated in refugee camps or living alongside locals, in a relatively small area. International agencies upgrade roads, if necessary, so that food convoys can reach the refugees. This has a positive aspect from the point of view of education services, since good road conditions and availability of project vehicles mean that teacher training and supervision can be provided. International agencies provide or monitor the educational activities, and funding will not continue unless certain standards are met.

Negative logistical aspects include security problems, which may make it difficult or expensive to transport materials to the refugee sites; and which mean that valuable items may not be secure in schools or training centres. Thus in some camps, women were reluctant to keep sewing machines in their homes, while the latter were being used as temporary training centres.

The proximity of refugees to schools may encourage the enrolment of children in school, especially the enrolment of girls. African families often spend the day working their farms, far from the village school, with only one or two (male) children exempted to pursue formal schooling. In refugee camps, however, it can happen that the basics of food, water and fuel are relatively close at hand, and that even girls can be spared to attend school. It can also happen, however, that collection of fuelwood or water becomes a major problem, as nearby supplied are exhausted. This can entail the absence of girls from school, since they may have to help collect fuelwood or water, or care for younger children while their mothers do this work. Refugee populations often have high fertility rates and many infants to be cared for.

The structure of relief activities can also interfere with school attendance. One school apologised for lower enrolment figures in June than in May, saying that pupils had not been disillusioned with schooling but that the June count had been taken during the period of food distribution! There can be other negative factors such as the timing of water tanker deliveries or of a daily distribution of milk for children.

Refugee girls may drop out of school at puberty because their traditional modes of coping with menstruation have been disrupted (eg. no access to cotton -type materials previously gathered from areas near their homes). Menstruation can also be problematic for refugee teachers.

In terms of culture, the refugee situation can reinforce conservative tendencies among the refugee population and/or present opportunities for exploring new ways of life. Being among strangers can intensify observance of purdah. On the other hand, participation in women's committees, exposure to miscellaneous projects and relief activities can lead to broader horizons. The situation of widows can be very difficult, with pressure to marry the deceased husband's brother, and possible marginalisation of her daughters. It has also been observed that the shortage of men due to combat losses and migration can lead to early marriage of girls and/or polygamy, with a negative effect on school enrolment.

Policy and programming issues

Many policy and programming issues are not very different in refugee situations and in national education systems. However, in the case of refugee education, there is an opportunity to design a system from scratch, in a way that will promote female participation. Some aspects of system design are discussed below. In the absence of a 'government', design parameters should arise from extensive consultations with the refugee community, especially women's committees and female educators.

Some of the many policy and programming issues are discussed below.

Special facilities for girls

Girls' schools? There should be serious consultation with the refugee community regarding the need or otherwise for single sex arrangements. The advantages of such schools in conservative societies or for older girls in any society are that worries over religious constraints and over the safety of older girls are diminished. The disadvantages are primarily logistic. In such societies there may be insufficient educated or even fully literate women who could serve as teachers. Moreover, if the refugee community is small or scattered, there may not be enough girls interested in schooling to justify a separate school.

Where the community wishes for it, and where the logistics are feasible, then girls' schools, or a girls' shift in a 2-shift school, or separate classes for girls may be appropriate.

Separate girls' schools for Afghan refugees in Pakistan did not lead to high levels of girls' enrolment, however. Attendance in boys' schools funded by UNHCR topped 100,000 while enrolment in girls' schools peaked at about 8,000 despite the effort to encourage it!! (Similar patterns were observed in schools operated by Afghan political parties.) This shows the influence of cultural constraints in a conservative society.

Separate latrines/staff room

In less conservative cultures, girls and boys may sit together, or girls may sit to one side of a classroom and boys to the other. Still, the girls may have to run home to go to the toilet, as may female teachers. Practical measures to improve female school attendance and the effectiveness of schooling may therefore include constructing separate latrines for girls and for female teachers. A small separate area for female teachers to sit separately from male colleagues during school break may also be appropriate in some cultures. These practical issues should be taken on board at the beginning of a refugee education programme.

The open learning/distance education methods previously used with South African and Namibian refugees in camps in Southern Africa may be adapted to meet the needs of today's refugees seeking to continue their education and lacking facilities to do so. This approach, which UNHCR is currently exploring with the Southern Africa Extension Unit, Dar es Salaam, may help promote the educational participation of older female students, especially if some female tutors are recruited.

Recruitment of female teachers

The presence of female teachers is likely to increase the enrolment and retention of girls. It is therefore desirable to recruit female teachers even if they are less qualified than males, and to provide in-service training. The best qualified males sometimes wish to leave teaching and take up some better paid work on a relief project (or perhaps on a building site), so it makes good sense to train female teachers who are likely to stay with their new profession both in the camps and on return to the country of origin. Recruitment of female refugees as teachers, preferably as 50% of teachers, and provision of in-service teacher training are ways in which refugee projects may build a better future for girls and for female education. There should be a career path for refugee girls into teaching; and female teachers should provide a role model for refugee girls of academic inclination.

Provision of child care facilities

The refugee situation and the presence of NGOs committed to community participation should facilitate the arrangement of child care structures, supportive of girls' schooling and the education and training of older female refugees.

Relevance of subject matter

Illiterate refugee parents, facing an uncertain and often unpromising future, are more likely to send their daughters to school if they can see some point, such as learning to sew or studying religion. It is important to consult the community on their preferences and viewpoints, and to discuss with them how to meet the extra costs involved. It should be remembered also that when there is no parental pressure to attend school, it is the interest of the girls themselves that will promote attendance or drop-out. Hence, a systematic effort should be made to discover what girls themselves perceive to be the reasons for attending school and the subject matter and activities that would encourage continued attendance.

Community motivation

UNHCR has placed increased emphasis in recent years on the development of its Community Services capacity. Community Services staff motivate refugees to help themselves, often through establishing a Community Services Committee in each camp or sector of a camp. Sometimes this committee will include males and females, sometimes there will be a male committee with (or without) female representatives. If possible, there will be a separate Women's Committee also. (In conservative cultures, the males have to give their consent for this.)

One function of the Women's Committee can be to encourage school attendance by girls, and to seek ways of overcoming barriers to girls' attendance. For example, certain camp activities may be rescheduled, to take place after school hours (not likely to be popular with project staff responsible for delivering water, children's milk, etc, however).

Women's Committees established in some refugee camps in Pakistan through the Radda Barnen/UNHCR initiative supporting a special Social Welfare Cell (in the Commissionerate for Afghan refugees), led to unexpected community demands for female literacy classes. Likewise, an animator training programme (for males) led ultimately to women in remote camps requesting educational programmes. The more resources that are put into community motivation, the more rapidly progress can be made on the development of female education. The Radda Barnen Training Unit (for community services workers) in Peshawar represents a model of what can be done if resources are available.

Literacy/numeracy programmes

The most neglected area of female education in refugee camps is perhaps literacy/numeracy education. Only 0.4% of UNHCR's budget for the education sector goes for literacy programmes, and some of this is for males. This is partly due to the extreme financial constraints and uncertainty under which UNHCR operates. (Often, budget cuts at country level mean that education programmes other than schooling come under the axe, to conserve more immediately life-saving programmes such as health and water supply.) Yet refugee women need basic literacy/numeracy for everyday activities. They should be able to check that they are receiving the correct rations for their families, and know if they are being cheated. They should be able to follow the instructions of the health staff if their children are having special foods or treatments. They should be able to check their earnings if they are engaged in production of relief goods for wages or selling their products. They will benefit from being able to read various documents and sign their name.

Moreover, the facilities are readily available for literacy/numeracy classes. Refugees live close together, and can use community premises for study, such as schools (after school classes finish). There are school teachers willing to earn extra money by acting as literacy teachers. If Women's Committees discuss the types and timings of literacy/numeracy classes they would like, the basic constraint is funding for reading and writing materials and part-time staff. Not very expensive, yet likely to generate some of the benefits with which female education is associated, such as better

health and nutrition for their children, income benefits for the family and specifically support and guidance for the schooling of their own children, girls as well as boys.

We may mention here the work of a refugee women's NGO in Mexico which has implemented a literacy programme for Guatemalan refugees. Literacy trainees were made aware of the right of their daughters to primary education, as well as other facilities for refugees, of which they had not previously been aware.

Vocational training

Among conservative societies, even all-women literacy or vocational training classes for women may not be acceptable. Afghan refugee leaders mostly had no objection to women studying vocational subjects such as tailoring, however, provided that the classes were held within a home compound and that the teacher (and supporting NGO staff) were women. Several NGO projects in Pakistan adopted this model, moving from camp to camp, finding a refugee trainer who could teach a group of other women in a home compound, for a few hours each day. The NGO staff provided the equipment, materials, guidance and course outline and monitored progress regularly, giving help as needed. At the end of the course, those women who could pass a simple test (basically those who had attended regularly) were given one of the sewing machines on which they had been trained). Another approach was to attach one or more women as apprentices to a skilled craftswoman.

Training is often linked with refugee income-generation projects such as machine knitting, raising of small livestock or vegetable cultivation. The conditions under which refugees live may prevent agricultural activities, however. Often, there is barely sufficient water for household needs and no possibility of cultivating vegetables. Often the refugees, especially the poorer ones, have minimal space for cultivation or care of livestock. In general, it is difficult to design vocational training programmes that lead on to sufficient work-experience to reinforce and upgrade the skills learned, due to the limited purchasing power of the refugee population and of the local citizens. The effort should be made, however, to invest in skills training programmes supportive of a durable solution.

Recommendations/suggestions to increase educational participation of refugee girls and women

1.   Consultation with refugee Women's Committees and with teachers and parents regarding physical structures for schooling, school timings, inclusion of locally relevant 'home economics' (or other) topics, arrangements for girls after puberty, etc.

2.   Appointment of female refugee teachers (preferably 50%), with in-service training to provide necessary support.

3.   Strenghthening Community Services activities, which include motivation for female education and training.

4. Utilising refugee situation to promote literacy/numeracy courses for refugee teenage girls and women; also 'second chance' accelerated primary education, if desired (e.g. BRAC model).

5.   Exploring the use of <u>open learning/distance education approaches</u> to post-primary education of girls and women.

6.   Promoting <u>vocational training programmes for women</u>, linked to work-experience/income-generationopportunities, with use of <u>informal apprenticeships and community-based mobile courses, targetted preferentially to needy female-headed families.</u>

7.   <u>Mobilising financial resources earmarked to the education and training of refugee girls and women</u> (over and above the resources normally budgetted for formal schooling). (This is the biggest constraint.)

8.   Setting a target that <u>at least 50% of beneficiaries of refugee education and training programmes in each country programme</u> should be female (even if many are enrolled in less academic courses such as literacy).

     (At present, the overall percentage of female beneficiaries in each UNHCR region is the following:

          Africa: 40%   Europe: 46%   S.W.Asia/M.East/N.Africa:16%
          Asia/Oceania: 50%   Latin America/Caribbean: 52%)

9. A general recommendation would be:

     <u>(To promote female education) 'with particular concern for the disruption of education caused to refugee girls, and girls among internally displaced populations'.</u>

Part II: Statistical profile

1.   Refugee girls and women in the Third World

     The 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees defined a refugee as any person who 'owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his (sic) nationality and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'. A broader definition is currently in use, to include persons displaced by foreign aggression, civil conflict or massive violation of human rights (Organisation of African Unity, 1969; Cartagena Declaration on Refugees, 1984). Increasingly, refugee organisations are also asked to assist internally displaced persons and returnees. As of December 1993, UNHCR was responsible for the protection and assistance of an estimated 23 million persons in 143 countries, comprised of more than 16 million refugees, some 3 million internally displaced persons, and 3 million others, including victims of war and returnees.

     This paper focuses on the areas covered by UNHCR's Regional Bureaux for Africa, Asia/Oceania, Latin America and South-West Asia/the Middle East (abbreviated as RBA, RBAO, RBAC and SWANAME respectively), with assisted

refugee populations recorded as 4,378,700, 410,200, 58,200, and 2,001,100 respectively, as of December 1993. The total of some 7 million assisted refugees in these areas gives the order of magnitude of UNHCR's responsibilities, despite the numerous problems of estimation and definition which make it inexact. About half of the refugees are children and half are adults; likewise about half are male and half are women and girls. The quality of the data on most refugee populations does not allow us to be more precise. We are thus considering some 1.8 million girls and 1.8 million women, as well as some 1.8 million boys and 1.8 million men. In view of the weaknesses of such statistics, and the possibility that men are under-represented in some refugee populations, we may thus estimate that there were some 2 million refugee girls and 2 million refugee women (UNHCR-assisted) in Third World countries in December 1993 (plus internally displaced and returnees).

2. Types of refugee education

Refugee education takes many forms, depending on local circumstances. In some areas, refugees may enrol in government or private schools alongside local children, without any outside intervention. In some situations, UNHCR assists governments to expand existing schools so that refugee students can be accommodated without causing overcrowding. In some instances, UNHCR assists refugee children to meet school fees and other expenses of school attendance. These arrangements are typical of a situation where education systems in the country of origin and the country of asylum are similar, and especially where the language of instruction is the same. Often, however, schools are established specifically for refugee populations, because the refugees are concentrated in an isolated location and/or because of a decision to follow the curriculum of the country of origin or a mixed curriculum (incorporating elements from the country of origin and host country school programmes).

Refugee education and training programmes may be run by the host government, by NGOs, or by refugee organisations; often, by a mixture of these. For example, education programmes for Afghan refugees in refugee camps in Pakistan included a UNHCR-funded school system, implemented by the provincial governments; school programmes organised by the various Afghan political parties/religious groups; some schools organised by NGOs; teacher training programmes organised by NGOs and by the bilateral 'Pak-German' project; vocational training programmes and health education programmes organised by all the above-mentioned types of organisation; several literacy projects; etc.

3. Refugee education programmes: a gender analysis

As mentioned above, it is impossible to know exactly how many refugee children attend school, since many enrol in schools in the host country on an individual basis. Moreover, there are no statistical data on schooling provided by voluntary agencies from their own funds. Data is available for UNHCR-funded programmes, however. As of 1993, UNHCR was funding the schooling of over half a million refugee children, including approximately 496,238 in Third World countries, as mentioned earlier. It also supported some 2,558 students at tertiary level in Third World countries. Beneficiaries of vocational courses totalled some, of literacy courses some, and of language courses some (predominantly in Third World countries).

Most refugee schooling was supported under UNHCR's budget code for 'primary education'. However, it should be pointed out that the term 'primary education' has no real meaning in the international context, since it can refer to grade 1 to 4 in one country and to grade 1 to 8 in another. The total number of primary school refugee students supported by UNHCR in Third World countries in 1993 was approximately 477,115. The gender breakdown of these students was 34% female and 66% male, reflecting the high proportion of Muslims among the refugee populations. The region-specific figures for the percentage of female students to total enrolment in countries responding providing genderised data to UNHCR Headquarters were as follows:

Africa	40%
Asia	47%
Latin America	47%
SWANAME	16%

These figures reflect cultural patterns, notably the lack of cultural support for female education among refugees from Afghanistan residing in Pakistan and Iran. There is a gender disparity in Kenya, as well as the group of 12,000 boys who marched with their teachers to Ethiopia, back to Southern Sudan (their home) and were then displaced again, into Northern Kenya, and the presence of Somali refugees. There is some gender disparity among the Liberian refugees displaced mainly into Guinea (38% female students) and Cote d'Ivoire (45% female students), and among the Mozambican refugees, displaced mostly into Malawi (40% female students) and Zimbabwe (45% female students), and indeed in almost all refugee populations (as there is among most Third World populations also).

4.   Participation rates for primary education

The question of participation rates for refugee education has been the subject of debate, but in reality the quality of statistical data on overall refugee student numbers (not just UNHCR-funded students) and on the child populations with which these enrolments should be compared do not permit a proper consideration of this topic. As noted previously, refugee students are not recorded on any international data base. Moreover, the estimation of eligible students is made difficult by the sometimes enormous biases that exist in refugee population figures (e.g. refugees claim to have more family members, or attempt multiple registration, in order to obtain more food rations; or, governments influence refugee statistics for political reasons). Other difficulties arise, such as the migration to towns of refugees officially resident in camps.

Bearing all these hesitations in mind, it would be possible to compare the population of some 600,000 boys and 600,000 girls in a 5-year cohort among the refugees living in the Third World with UNHCR-funded primary school enrolments of roughly 300,000 boys and 150,000 girls. (Though some primary school cycles are longer than 5 years, relatively few of the refugee students in these figures will have studied for longer than 5 years, due to high rates of drop out.) This would give a 50% coverage for boys and 25% for girls; to which must be added some additional percentage points for pupils not supported by UNHCR. These averages are depressed by the low participation rates for certain refugee populations.

Girls drop out of school earlier than boys. The percentage of refugee girls enrolled in UNHCR-funded education programmes in African countries declined from 46% in grade 1 to 38% in grade 3 and 30% in grade 5. In Asia the ratio fell from 52% in grade 1 to 42% in grade 5. In the Middle East/North African region, the ratio fell from 20% in grade 1 to 10% in grade 5.

5. Secondary and tertiary education

As mentioned earlier, the borderline between 'primary' and 'secondary' education remains undefined. For example, one country may consider grades 6 to 8 to be 'lower secondary' or 'middle' while another may regard just grades 9 and 10 as being 'lower secondary'. In some cases grades 11 and 12 may be regarded as secondary, whereas elsewhere they may be regarded as higher or tertiary education.

Nevertheless the refugee enrolment statistics for secondary and tertiary education are discouraging. In 1993, and excluding Europe, UNHCR funded the secondary education of 19,123 students, and supported 2,558 tertiary students. Some refugee students attend schools organised by NGOs, and a number of agencies provide scholarships for refugee students at these levels. Total student numbers are thus unclear, but are undoubtedly unimpressive.

Gender disparities are again severe, with only 35% of secondary students and 25% of tertiary level students being female (data for Third World countries).

6. Vocational/non-formal education and training

The picture is not all bleak regarding non-formal education and training programmes. In some countries, there have been extensive programmes. Current figures for UNHCR-funded programmes in Third World countries (see Annex 5) show about 5,000 male and 6,000 female beneficiaries of vocational training programmes; and 5,000 male as contrasted to 11,000 female beneficiaries of literacy programmes. These figures do not include vocational training budgetted under income-generation and other programmes. Even taking account of this factor, the apparently satisfactory gender structure should not give rise to complacency. Given the massive under-representation of females in formal schooling, it would be desirable to see much higher totals for refugee females participating in non-formal programmes. There are unmet felt needs, and the constraint is the lack of (earmarked) funds.

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REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF REFUGEES
DECEMBER 1993

	Refugees	In percentages
RBA	6,170,000	37
RBAO	1,000,500	6
RBE	3,280,300	20
RBAC	1,415,800	9
SWANAME	4,535,200	28
TOTAL	16,401,800	100

RBA:	Regional Bureau for Africa
RBAO:	Regional Bureau for Asia and Oceania
RBE:	Regional Bureau for Europe
RBAC:	Regional Bureau for the Americas and Caribbean
SWANAME:	Regional Bureau for the South West Asia, North Afric and the Middle East

Brief addendum on vocational training

There are many approaches to the concept of vocational training. Often, well-meaning people think that providing skills through training courses will somehow give every beneficiary employment or an income. This has led to a tremendous amount of frustration as courses have been set up and students trained, many of whom obtain neither employment nor income. Courses are often too theoretical, in the sense that they do not convey real world expertise. Courses are often given in skills for which the labour market is already saturated. Courses are given in skills for which the resource base is lacking, such as agricultural skills training for trainees lacking access to land or water. Training programmes such as apprenticeship to informal sector producers are often more useful than courses given in training centres, but even here the labour market is subject to saturation.

As a general rule, skill training programmes for refugees should meet the criteria that the trainee should have a realistic chance of work-experience after receiving the training, at least for a year, so that the skill can be consolidated. Where possible, the skill should support the hoped-for durable solution (e.g. be usable after voluntary repatriation, where this can be expected). And a donor agency should ensure that any implementing partner has the necessary grasp of employment/economic realities, and management skills, to implement a worthwhile programme. (We have all seen unsaleable goods produced by graduates of 'skill training' programmes.)

Skill training programmes for refugee women should relate to their actual opportunities to use the proposed skills. They should therefore be designed after a careful review of the refugee economy, and in discussion with refugee women. Since the refugee economy is often very weak, it will often be wise to link the training programme to some income-generation project, such as the production of relief goods, the keeping of small livestock, etc. Thus, it is (once again) difficult to obtain good statistics on vocational training programmes for women (or men).

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GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

A CASE FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

prepared by*

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1.   Introduction

It is appropriate that the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 will consider the education of girls and women as one major topic. This is in recognition of education as a key to and determinant of development. Education is also first and foremost recognized as a basic human right. Yet 70 percent of all missing school children are female. Another reason for concern is that the optimism created by the Jomtien Conference on Education for All (1990) and the World Summit for Children (1990) on the ability to achieve EFA and to achieve gender equity in education appears to have gradually waned, at least in Africa. Recent monitoring efforts indicate that while progress is visible in other regions, EFA is in a state of decline in Africa while the political will for its achievement appears to be lacking.

At a recent Ministerial Consultation on School Drop-out and Adolescent Pregnancy organised by the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and the Government of Mauritius, African education ministers and other senior policy makers resolved that economic and social constraints should no longer be made excuses for inaction in tackling the factors hindering female education in the continent. They called for the accountability of each individual minister of education in mobilising for appropriate education policies and programmes aimed at improving access, retention and achievement/performance for girls and women in each country. They gave themselves the deadline of one year (from September 1994) by which to report back what each one had done to initiate positive policy reform and implementation. They undertook responsibility for immediate review of existing policies and programmes as baseline information for evaluating any new actions.

This paper reiterates the importance of political commitment to issues relating to female education within the context of Education for All (EFA). It is our conviction that existing gender disparities in education and other sectors of development should not be left to chance or to the natural order of things. The multiple obstacles facing female education demand deliberate efforts aimed at identifying and implementing multiple gender sensitive strategies, well coordinated and appropriately targeted for greatest impact. In education, above all other development sectors, affirmative action remains the most appropriate and short-term tool for eliminating gender disparities.

The need for and mechanisms used to implement affirmative action, however, need to

be well explained to all concerned or it is frequently misconceived as unfair advantage in the allocation of resources or lowering standards in the case of increasing access. A case must be made for it through demonstration of the past and current failure of gender neutral policies and approaches.

2. Main Obstacles to Girls' Education

Cost both direct and indirect has been identified as a major obstacle affecting enrolment and retention. The economic hardships facing many countries of Africa, the rising cost of providing education and the new emphasis on increased cost-sharing, now that many governments are unable to provide free education, all contribute to this situation. Girls in Africa participate more that boys in the household economy. The opportunity cost of sending them to school is, therefore, higher for girls than for boys. School systems in Africa have as yet to adopt flexible schedules (e.g. BRAC) that take into account this reality. Absenteeism is more frequent for girls than for boys. Most parents in Africa expect daughters to get married and move away from their families to their marital home. Any benefits of female education are, therefore, seen to belong elsewhere. Preference for sons is another factor influencing parental decision-making on who to send to school if a choice has to be made. In many African cultures, the son is expected not only to maintain the family line but also to support his elderly parents. The latter is more of a myth than a reflection of modern day reality.

Socialization towards marriage and withdrawal for early marriage are factors hindering girls' participation in those areas dominated by pastoralists, and moslems (in Kenya). Adolescent pregnancy affects girls in the last two years of primary school. Most countries in Africa have policies of exclusion for school drop-outs due to pregnancy.

Distance and travel to school which raise the problem of safety generally and sexual safety in particular is another obstacle to girls' education. The absence of female teachers in some areas contributes to lack of role models and low motivation among girls. Added to gender stereotypes in school textbooks and discouraging attitudes from gender insensitive teachers, all these factors combine to cause poor performance among girls who are made to repeat classes (Kenya) which can also lead to drop-out.

The age of enrolment is another factor that affects girls (Tanzania, Zambia) where girls may reach puberty while they are still in lower primary school.

3. Affirmative Action:

Affirmative Action (A.A.) which in our case is synonymous with positive discrimination derives from acknowledgement of a serious problem needing urgent attention. It has been used extensively in most African countries to redress colonial imbalances in development. AA is currently in full gear in South Africa where the system of apartheid was institutionalised as official government policy. It is based on the premise that unless deliberate positive steps are undertaken to overcome inequalities, a benign neutrality in enrolment and participation practices will perpetrate the status-quo indefinitely. This is what has happened to gender issues in education where gender disparities persist despite phenomenal growth in education systems of most countries.

Affirmative action should be undertaken in such a way that it addresses a specific identified cause of a problem or a set of problems. It should focus on where disparities exist e.g. low participation geographic areas, disadvantaged social groups, specific levels of education or subject areas. In this sense, AA becomes a long-term official strategy for addressing inequalities in education and gender inequalities emerging from past policies and practices and any new policies that may be found to perpetrate inequalities e.g. changes in admission criteria. Besides addressing specific causes, AA needs to be conceived within a supportive environment. The "package approach" is strongly recommended in order to effectively address the multiple causes of low participation by females in education. This means that the problem of low quality secondary schools for girls should be accompanied by recruitment of female teachers and gender sensitization of male teachers, if any quality improvement strategy is to have any impact.

Failure in AA programmes is usually due to interventions e.g. lowering of entry marks, that are introduced piecemeal without accompanying cushioning in advocacy, remedial and counselling components to bridge knowledge gaps and prepare target group psychologically for participation.

The major problem of AA programmes in African education is that they are borrowed wholesale without due consideration and detailed assessment of how and why they have worked in other countries. The tendency has also been for governments to ignore well tried strategies among NGOs, with particular reference to alternative education programmes for school drop-out. There has also been failure to develop

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monitoring mechanisms for any AA strategies put into place to determine whether they have made any difference overtime, or how and why. There is also lack of coordination of interventions directed at the family, home level, community, school and those at the national level.

4.   **Some Observations on Current Interventions**:

(a)   The issue of cost has been addressed in the past with some governments providing free education. Where this has been done, e.g. Malawi (1994), Kenya (1974), there has been a rush in enrolment with an increase of over 100 per cent. Under the current economic reality in Africa, however, the total removal of all fees has been found to be unrealistic though popular. Indeed under the SAPS now being implemented, the strategy of cost sharing is now mandatory. The problem is how to implement cost-sharing without hurting the already disadvantaged groups. In Kenya among other countries, the government is providing a fund for bursaries (fee subsidies) but leaving it to the district and school authorities to determine who gets subsidized. In such a case, the national government may have a desire or policy for the implementation of equity goals but unless this is communicated to and monitored at the local level, girls may not benefit from bursaries. This is more likely to happen where bursaries are directed to only those enrolled, the majority of whom will be boys especially in low enrolment areas.

Some NGOs also have fees subsidy programmes, provision of textbooks, uniforms and school meals. Such programmes need to be increasingly targeted for redressing gender imbalances.

(b)   Gender training and sensitization programmes now being undertaken in Zambia and Kenya, among other countries, are expected to sharpen the vision of policy makers, planners and practitioners on the need to address gender issues structurally and in all stated policies. A gender policy clearly stated with structured monitoring mechanisms encourages implementers to pay attention to articulated ideals aimed at gender equity.

(c)   Data Creation: There are new efforts to create gender dissegregated data in education, among other sectors. Gender sensitive and especially affirmative action policies need to be backed by data which justifies any actions to be taken.

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(d) Advocacy: A number of countries and NGOs are engaged in working with parents and communities in focussed discussions and reflections on traditional practices affecting girls' education e.g. early marriage, dowry, female circumcision. Such advocacy and public education programmes create an enabling environment for the implementation of affirmative action programmes. Social marketing techniques have been tried with success in population and health programmes. Malawi is trying them out for girls' education. It is important to capture the interest and support of the mass media especially national radio systems which have a wide outreach in some African countries. Folk media is particularly useful at community level.

FAWE recently found role-playing by school girls very effective in communicating the constraints facing girls' education to policy makers.

(e) Quota Application:

The quota system has been used in African countries since the colonial days in order to achieve desired goals in terms of geographical, ethnic, racial and other "balances". Places are reserved for certain groups because of observed disadvantage - historical, social, physical or mental condition. It is, therefore, amazing that any suggestions of quotas based on gender should raise so much conflict, indeed generate heated opposition even among women themselves.

The application of the quota system often means the lowering of entry point for the affected group and this leads to accusations based on unfairness and favouritism.

It is our conviction that until such time as the ground is so levelled that girls and boys are competing on equal level, that for as long as gender disparities in education persist, that for as long as equal and quality facilities are not available for girls and boys alike, the quota system is necessary for enabling girls to enrol in higher numbers, remain in school and to do well. Progressive education policies, resource allocation mechanisms, provision of bursaries and scholarships, school mapping, selection of teachers for training, and their posting to schools, provision of equipment and textbooks, etc. must all be done in a way that recognizes current disparities and are aimed at correcting past disadvantages.

African countries, among others are either serious about the achievement of the goal of gender equity in education or they are not. If they are, then their seriousness has to be assessed in real terms. As we have stated elsewhere, gender disparities in education cannot be willed away. They cannot be overcome without very deliberate effort. Examples of progressive thinking are clearly evident in several countries.

In Malawi, where the government has been providing new schools, one third of all secondary school places are reserved for girls. Tanzania has a similar policy.

Kenya and Uganda have lowered the entry points for women entering universities. This was necessitated by new emphasis on Maths and Science enrolment, which ended up discriminating against girl students who do not have as good facilities for the study of science subjects at the secondary school level as boys.

The application of the quota system in teacher training is of particular importance for securing the number of female teachers appropriate for all levels of the education system. Overwhelming evidence from all regions points to increased enrolment, improved survival and performance by girls where there is visible presence of female teachers whose teaching role doubles with that of role model and counsellor

(f) Declaration or legislation of compulsory education does not by itself guarantee equal access. This is clearly demonstrated by countries like Egypt, Guinea and Mali which have had compulsory education laws and yet still display low rates of female enrolment.

In Botswana, official policy calls for the expulsion of pregnant girls and the boys responsible for the pregnancy. One study revealed that among female drop-outs 56% of girls drop out of school due to pregnancy while boys expelled for making school girls pregnant constituted only 3 %. It would appear then that a policy like this one, although on the surface appearing to treat girls and boys alike, does hurt girls many times over.

Most African countries have permanent expulsion policies for pregnant girls

with no provision for re-entry.(Malawi, Egypt)

(g)   Boarding schools:

In Africa, boarding single-sex schools have gained preference because of their comparative good performance. They eliminate the dangers of travel while at the same time allowing girls space for private study, games, etc. away from the hustle and bustle of household chores and responsibilities. Most girls' boarding schools are also headed and staffed by female teachers who provide for appropriate role models.

In recent debate on education for all, boarding schools and single-sex school have been said to be expensive and unaffordable and it would appear that many African governments are now uniformly moving towards day, co-educational schools.

It is, however, important to weigh the cost of good single-sex boarding schools for girls against the high cost of non-enrolment (ignorance and illiteracy), drop-out and poor performance so frequently associated with most mixed day schools, with particular reference to low participation areas, certain religious groups, secondary school level and areas where distance is a major issue.

(h)   <u>Single-sex Schools</u>

Although systematic research is needed into issues related to single-sex versus mixed schools, current practice and preference points to belief among parents and educators that single sex schooling in Africa increases enrolment, prolongs survival and raises performance. Singe sex schools provide for confidence among parents concerning the moral security of their daughters, (especially in schools with women teachers), provide for higher aspirations among girls who are not dwarfed by competition with boys, and removes their fear of competing with boys for which most girls have been socialised against since birth. In single sex schools, girls do not have to compete for space or equipment with their more aggressive brothers. No one ridicules the "clever", "bright" ones as is frequently the case in mixed schools.

In most African cultures, boys intimidate girls and unless the teachers are exceptionally gender sensitive, the best talents in girl pupils will remain quashed. It is no wonder that in several countries, the best performance among

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girls is in single sex schools.

Deliberate streaming of girls especially in subjects in which they are weak (Maths and Science) is well known to improve their performance and self confidence.

(i) School Mapping and Security Issues:

Available research evidence points to the fact that the participation of girls in education is more sensitive to distance than that of boys. Where schools are available locally, girls are more likely to be given equal opportunities. This is because parents the world over are more protective to their daughters than they are to their sons. School mapping should in all cases take the needs of girls into consideration.

In addition to distance, many parents demonstrate concern over the moral security of their daughters more than they do over that of their sons. The fear that girls will be molested on their way to school, on public transport or by male teachers is expressed in many countries.

Localisation of schools and the presence of female teachers is a major incentive for overcoming this fear by parents. Careful selection of teachers with parental involvement will ensure choice of individuals parents have confidence in.

Where organized transport can be arranged, and is made affordable, parents prefer school transport rather than public transport for all children but girls in particular.

(j) Remedial and Counselling interventions:

Remedial and counselling programmes are prevalent in several African countries -Ghana Science camps for girls, Botswana Road Show, Sierra Leone Basic Science Programme for Girls, etc. The main problem with these activities is that they do not happen in the mainstream and so the impact of their innovation has not been translated into regular teaching and learning. Affirmative action experiments need deliberate mechanisms for incorporating them into the mainstream.

(k)   Addressing other Sectors:

Affirmative action is also necessary in sectors associated with the education of girls.   There is a direct connection between the status of women and their education with that of girls especially their own daughters.   Economic policies that increase women's earning capacities have direct impact in demonstrating increased returns to schooling.   Higher incomes for women also increase mothers' capacity for meeting the cost of their children's education, and is associated with increase in the education of girls.   In Kenya, there is increasing evidence of a link between the economic (income-generating) activities of women's groups and the education of members' children.   Profits from such activities have been directed to payment of school fees, buying textbooks and uniforms for children.

Affirmative action in the provision of credit and other services for such activities is, therefore, a justifiable strategy for accelerating female education.

Affirmative action is also called for in development programmes aimed at reducing the opportunity costs of girls' schooling.   The success of rural water projects that bring water closer to the home, development of alternative energy sources and the establishment of day care facilities, reduces the labour and time demands on the girl child at the household level and is improving her chances of increased participation in education.

Affirmative action here would include deliberate involvement of women in decision making and proportionate allocation of available resources and extension services.

5.   In conclusion, we underline the need for deliberate, special measures for overcoming gender disparities in education.   This is an issue that cannot be left to solve itself through the natural process.   Affirmative action is an essential component of this deliberate process.   Gender neutral approaches are not likely to achieve gender equity in education for a long time to come.   Within the context of EFA, it is possible to undertake activities that recognize the specific causes of female low participation and to address them. The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) was created in 1992 with the specific objective of addressing policy related issues in girls' education in Africa.   FAWE is involved in strategic resource planning and allocation, policy review and analysis, demonstrative innovations that can illustrate policy

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reforms, advocacy and public education on the value of female education, and information dissemination. FAWE seeks to find essential linkage between research findings, policy and action for accelerating girls' education in Africa. FAWE believes that it is necessary to garner political commitment for the achievement of EFA. This should lead to deliberate shift of resources to EFA and girls' education and to unapologetic affirmative action throughout the education system.

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United Nations
Division for the Advancement of Women
Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference on Women
Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training
International Training Centre of the ILO
Turin (Italy)
10-14 October 1994

CONTRIBUTION FROM THE DISABLED PEOPLES'S
INTERNATIONAL WOMENS' COMMITTEE

To: The EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Turin, Italy, 10-14 October 1994

From: Disabled Peoples'International Womens' Committee

Access to education and training for girls and women with disabilities is one of our strategic objectives. If women with disabilities have this access they can be prepared to enter any field and make use of their abilities, both physical and mental. The reality is that women and girls with disabilities are considered less valuable than other women, and more costly to educate, and are therefore given less opportunities for education and training.

Employment is a critical component in enabling women with disabilities to achieve self esteem and social recognition. When special training is need, women with disabilities should not be disadvantaged in comparison with other women and other population groups. They should have appropiate access to all training programmes. It is necessary to take special steps to ensure this access so that the considerable contributions that women and girls with disabilities can make, derived from their experience, can be made possible.

We would like to contribute with some recommendations to your expert group meeting from an expert group meeting on Women and Disability that Disabled Peoples' International convened together with the Division for the Advancement of Women in Vienna, Austria in August 1991.

Education and vocational training:

Women and girls with disabilities should have full accesss and the right to primary, secondary and higher education and they should be encouraged to avail themselves of that right. Education must be in mainstream schools with special tuition requirements waived and supporting services provided, where necessary. This should also include adult literacy and other educational programmes. Women and girls with disabilities should be encouraged to seek educational opportunities to enable them to advance as full members of society.

UNESCO should give priority attention to the concerns of girls and women with disabilities in its educational programmes, especially those relating to the International Literacy Year, proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/104 of December 7,1987.

When special training is needed, girls and women with disabilities should not be disadvantaged in comparison with other population groups. Women with disabilities should have appropiate access to all training programmes. Existing vocational programmes for women should be made especially accessible to women and girls with disabilities.

For the integration of girls and women with disabilities into vocational training programmes, supportive services should be provided.

Jayshree A Mehta
Deputy Chair & Convenor

Gender & Science & Technology
8th International Conference January 1996 India   G A S A T 8

GASAT 8

Towards Sustainable Development : Achieving 4 E's, Education, Employment, Equality and Empowerment.

The 8th International Gender and Science and Technology, GASAT, conference, will take place in Ahmedabad, India, in early January 1996, following the UN conference on 'Women'in Development', in Beijing in September, 1995. GASAT is an international association with the objective of promoting women's participation in science and technology at all levels.

The objective of the conference is to bring together researchers and grass-root practitioners to share information, experiences and ideas on projects, programmes and other strategies for improving girls'/women's participation in science and technology, at all levels, both in the formal and nonformal areas, with a special focus on the developing countries.

The conference will develop collaborative research, action programmes and projects, evolving national, regional and international networks. It will further help to disseminate and formulate research and action programmes based on the resolutions of the UN Women's conference of Beijing.

In addition to developing strategies for girls' increased access to education and employment in the science-based areas, the urgent need to initiate courses and programmes at the grass-root level, has also been recognized. These should aim at improving the quality of life as well as increasing the democratic participation into decision-making. In this regard, **the identification and enhancement of scientific, technological and environmental knowledge and literacy among women** in the community, will play a key role in the development of that community. **The integration of indigenous knowledge-systems, along with cultural and environmental backdrops,** in science and technology education with a gender-perspective, leading to sustainable development will form another major focus area for GASAT 8, in January, 1996.

In order to ensure that GASAT 8 has a substantial participation by science educators from the developing countries, we appeal to donors, the developmental agencies and foundations to sponsor the participation of women science and technology educators from developing countries to GASAT 8. This conference welcomes the participation of both male and female researchers and educators.

Please look out for the call for papers in Sept./Oct. 1994. For further information kindly contact GASAT 8 Secretarial, SATWAC Foundation at the address below :

Ian Harding
Chair
UK)
Jayshree Mehta
Deputy Chair
a)
Alison Baignee
Executive Secretary
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Denmark)
Gaell Hildebrand
Austallia)
Ann Holmes
Canada)
Stella Williams
Nigeria)

JAYSHREE A. MEHTA,
Scientist & Deputy Chair, GASAT,

SATWAC Foundation
A1-22, Amrapali, Sukhipura, New ShardaMandir Road, Paldi, Ahmedabad-380 007 India
Tel.: 91 79 428991 Fax: 91 79 416941

CALL FOR PAPERS

Towards Sustainable Development : Achieving the 4 E's : Education, Employment, Equality and Empowerment

The 8th International Gender and Science and Technology conference (GASAT) will take place in **Ahmedabad, India, from January 5 - 10, 1996.** This will be the first time the conference will be held in a developing country. GASAT is an international association concerned with the promotion of women's participation in socially responsible science and technology at all levels.

The **GASAT 8** conference will bring together both male and female researchers and grassroots practitioners. The objective is to share information, experiences and ideas on projects, programmes and other strategies for improving girls'/women's participation in science and technology, both in the **formal and nonformal** areas. **GASAT 8** will have a special focus on the developing countries. It will also seek to promote North-South and South-South cooperation amongst women.

The conference will develop collaborative research and action programmes and projects, involving local, national and international networks. It will further help to disseminate and formulate programmes following the UN Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing, China, September 1995, with particular reference to its resolutions on gender, science and technology.

In addition to developing strategies for girls' increased access to education and employment in the science-based areas, the urgent need to initiate and sustain research and action programmes at the grassroots level will be discussed. Such programmes should aim at improving the quality of life as well as increasing democratic participation in decision-making. The identification and enhancement of the scientific, technological and environmental literacy among women, together with the integration of **indigenous knowledge,** so as to play a key role in the sustainable development of their community, will be essential.

Education has been generally accepted across all cultures as a key factor in the improvement of women's status in employment/work, bringing about equality and empowerment.

PROGRAMME CONTEXT

The areas of interest for GASAT 8 are related to the two broad fields, **education** and **employment** involving girls and women in urban as well as rural societies. Within these areas are a number of critical issues concerning the purposes of science & technology education.

EDUCATION	ISSUES
	• Access, content and quality
Formal and Nonformal	• Nature of Science & Technology and their presentation
	• Technology & Science relations and pedagogies
	• Indigenous knowledge and science & technology
	• Sustainable development and Science & Technology
	• Enhancement of women's scientific literacy and training through community science centres, science parks, science museums, etc.
EMPLOYMENT	• The structure and practices of Employment/work
	• Income generation, Skills & sustainability
	• Equality & Empowerment

Papers relating to these areas of interest describing interventions, strategies as well as research studies are invited. Other alternative forms of presentation are also invited. These will include

- keynote addresses
- poster sessions and exhibitions
- workshops
- mini symposia
- network and special interest group meetings, round tables.

The conference language will be English.

The conference committee invites suggestions for workshops and mini symposia involving groups of persons from countries that are comparable or cross-cultural.

GASAT AND THE FUTURE

Participants are also encouraged to bring ideas to GASAT 8 which can be discussed for further cooperative, collaborative research and action by GASAT members. Opportunities for such planning for future action will be provided throughout the conference. In this context, proposals for holding round tables/meetings are invited.

GASAT 8 will focus on

developing strategies for girls' access and sustained participation in Science and Technology fields including the quality and content aspect both at the formal and nonformal levels of Education;

developing strategies and workplans for improving employment and for the further progress of women in Science and Technology-related fields.

developing appropriate Science and Technology inputs to the work that women in many societies are traditionally involved in, such as agriculture, textiles, etc.;

creating scientific literacy related to daily life for the improvement of the quality of life in society;

integrating indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices leading to sustainable development;

empowering all women in the community through socially responsible Technology inputs which help in women's participation in decision making.

A major emphasis in GASAT 8 will be on taking Science to the majority of girls/women living in rural, semi-urban and urban-poor areas.

Key Dates

October-November 1994	Announcement of conference and call for papers
February 1995	Contribution proposals, abstracts and registrations forms alongwith the registration fee due
May 1995	Submission of final papers and details of other forms of contributions
June-July 1995	Review of papers and revision. Letters of acceptance
September 1995	Preparation of papers and programme details. Balance amount for the conference due
November 1995	Conference materials mailed to participants
January 1996	GASAT 8 conference at Ahmedabad, India

Partial financial support for colleagues from developing countries may be possible. At our end, the efforts for fund-raising are being continued. The first major support has been extended to us by NORAD (Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation). All delegates are urged to explore other avenues of support that may be available to them.

Participants are requested to register by the date above as conference participation is limited to 250.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Confirm your registration by returning the registration form, together with a registration fee of US $ 200 By Bank Draft or Banker's Cheque, by February '95. Bank Draft is preferable.

Send US $ 600 By Bank Draft at the time of balance amount for the conference due in Sept.'95.

Bank drafts should be sent in favour of Dena Bank, Ahmedabad, India. Account SATWAC Foundation, Navrangpura branch.

Send the registration form alongwith the Bank Draft back to :

Jayshree A. Mehta, Conference Chair
GASAT 8 Secretariat,
SATWAC Foundation
A1/22, Amrapali, Sukhipura, New Shardamandir Road, Paldi, Ahmedabad-380 007, India
Tel : 91 79 428991   Fax : 91 79 416941

THE GASAT ASSOCIATION

The GASAT (Gender and Science & Technology) Association provides a forum for individuals and organizations concerned with the inclusion of girls and women in the world of science and technology, from early childhood to work environments. The seven conferences held to date have been a contributing force in the advancement of the knowledge, understanding and programme development dealing with the issue of gender and science and technology. Previous International GASAT conferences have been held in Eindhoven, The Netherlands (1981); Oslo, Norway (1983); London, U.K. (1985); Ann Arbor, U.S.A. (1987); Haifa, Israel (1989); Melbourne, Australia (1991) and Waterloo, Canada (1993).

GASAT objectives are

* to encourage research into all aspects of gender differentiation in Science and Technology education and employment;

* to foster gender equity in Science and Technology, in education and in the workplace;

* to facilitate the entry of women into employment in the fields of Science and Technology, and their progress within such employment;

* to foster socially responsible and gender-inclusive science and technology;

* to provide a forum for the dissemination and discussion of research findings and experiences of those working in the field;

* to provide a support network for those working towards the objectives outlined above.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Ahmedabad is a major city in the State of Gujarat, in western India. It was in Ahmedabad that Mahatma Gandhi first gave shape to the epic struggle for freedom using the means of truth and non-violence. He established his first Ashram there in 1915 and stayed there until 1930, when the historic Salt March took place.

Ahmedabad is a historic city on the banks of the river Sabarmati with a population of about 3 millions. The city dates back more than a thousand years. It was first named Ashaval, and later Karnavati. In 1411, the foundations of Ahmedabad were laid.

Ahmedabad has an area of about 190 sq. kms. It lies 23.04 degrees North and 72.38 degrees East. It is 550 km north of Bombay. Its distance from Delhi is 1075 km, from Madras 1850 kms and from Calcutta about 2000 kms. It is well linked with the major cities of India by road, train and air. There are daily flights to and from Bombay and Delhi and three days/week flights from Calcutta and Madras.

Ahmedabad has a pleasant climate from December to February, temperature then being 25° to 30°C. It is an industrial city with many textile, chemical and pharmaceutical industries. It is the home of many academic, scientific institutions and organizations of national and international fame. It has rich traditions and reflects the colourful culture of Gujarati.

REGISTRATION FORM

GASAT 8   January 5-10-1996   Ahmedabad, India

GIVEN NAME :

SURNAME :

TITLE/POSITION :

ORGANIZATION :

ADDRESS :

PREFERRED MAILING ADDRESS :

POSTAL CODE :   COUNTRY :

TEL. NO. :   FAX :

E. MAIL :

TITLE OF CONTRIBUTION :

Form of Contribution (please check) :

☐ Paper   ☐ Mini Symposium Organizer
☐ Round Table Convenor   ☐ Mini Symposium Contributor
☐ Workshop Presenter   ☐ Poster Session

Accommodation :

☐ single room   ☐ double room (sharing with spouse)
☐ double room (sharing with participant)

* Please include with this registration form a 250 word description of your proposed contribution abstracts.

* Enclose US $ 200 Bank Draft in favour of Dena Bank, Ahmedabad, India, Account SATWAC Foundation, Navrangpura branch.

Return the completed form with your proposed contribution and fee by February 1995 to **GASAT 8 Secretariat, SATWAC Foundation, A1/22, Amrapali, Sukhipura, New Shardamandir Road, Paldi, Ahmedabad-380 007. India**

A New Cross-Country Education Stock Series Differentiated by Age and Sex

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Draft for comments.
June 1994

A New Cross-Country Education Stock Series Differentiated by Age and Sex

Introduction

A skilled and flexible labor force is increasingly being regarded as an essential ingredient for enhancing the global economic competitiveness of developing countries, as well as for maintaining the economic success of industrial nations. Education can prepare the labor force for handling complex jobs in a workplace that is becoming more technologically demanding. Moreover, in the case of developing countries, increases in literacy and average education levels can lead to remarkable improvements in the quality of life for a significant proportion of the population.

Past micro-level studies in both developed and developing countries have found a positive correlation between education, especially of the mother's, and fertility, and child health and school enrollment rates (see Haveman and Wolfe 1984 for a survey). Cross-country studies such as those of Azariadis and Drazen (1990) and Barro (1991) have also shown that economic growth depends on measures of human capital stock, usually measured as school enrollment ratios or literacy rates. And because there appear to be large and persistent differences in the education levels of men and women in many countries, a few cross-country studies have examined the effects of the education of men and women separately. Gill and Bhalla (1992) found that countries with high initial levels of female education are likely to experience greater future income growth, which the authors attribute to the effect of women's education through the health and schooling of the future generation. Countries with high initial level of male education, however, tend to have slower growth, as consistent with the neoclassical result of diminishing marginal returns to (human) capital. Hill and King (1993) found that countries with low levels of female education tend to have higher fertility rates and higher infant mortality rates; moreover, countries with a wide, persistent education gap between the sexes are likely to experience slower improvements in these indicators even when the absolute level of female education increases.

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Findings such as these have significant policy ramifications for education policy in particular, and for growth policy in general. To boost our confidence in future analyses, the troublesome issue of measuring the education variable as accurately as possible needs to be addressed. Past studies have attempted to represent the education stock of a country at a given point in time, but the measures used have their shortcomings. One set of studies use lagged school enrollment ratios reported by each country. Enrollment ratios which are available for a large number of countries reflect the current flow, not stock, of education. Using lagged ratios simply uses the flow for an older, but still single, age cohort of the population. Literacy rates are no better. They are defined and measured differently across countries, sometimes pertaining to the ability to read and write but at other times only to reading; and sometimes involving only self-reporting but at other times some direct testing. Literacy rates also reflect too basic a skill which may vary among very poor countries but not among a broader group of countries.

An improvement over these measures is years of educational attainment. Different estimates of this stock measure are now available. Psacharopoulos and Arriagada (1986, 1991) have computed the average years of schooling in the labor force by summing up the number of years of schooling at each education category in a census or survey, weighted by the proportion of the labor force which reported to have reached a given education category. A limitation of the database is that, although it covers a total of 99 countries, only 34 countries have more than one data point, thus greatly limiting the usefulness of the database for time series analysis across countries. Another limitation is that cross-country comparisons are constrained by the fact that the labor force is frequently defined differently across countries. Thirdly, due to what data countries choose to report and the fact that the labor force is dominated by men, the data are frequently based on the population of adult males only. The database is thus less useful for analyses which include women.

Another set of studies uses a perpetual inventory method for computing education stock. This method involves cumulating flows of completed school years

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using annual enrollment ratios at different education cycles. This education stock is then adjusted for the age mix in the adult population at any year using mortality rates. This methodology was used by Lau, Jamison and Louat (1991) and refined by Nehru, Swanson, and Dubey (1993).

Whereas the data series mentioned so far do not separate male and female education stock, two other data sets do: an extension of the Lau, Jamison and Loaut database which was prepared for the *World Development Report 1991*, and the Barro-Lee database. Barro and Lee (1993) based their estimates on the reported distribution of the population aged 25 and over across seven education levels, namely, no schooling, incomplete primary cycle, complete primary cycle, first secondary cycle, second secondary cycle, incomplete higher cycle, and complete higher education. Using the known duration of each cycle for each country, they either assign the number of years of schooling associated with a completed cycle or one-half the duration of each cycle when the cycle is not completed. They use a mix of the perpetual inventory approach and interpolation through regression analysis when the education distribution is missing for a country. More restrictive assumptions are also used to estimate years of postsecondary education.

The new database we present here uses the perpetual inventory approach, and is closest to the methodology used by Nehru, Swanson, and Dubey. Our methodology improves upon the previous databases by producing gender- and age-differentiated estimates, as well as by relaxing some of the restrictive assumptions used in other databases. The usefulness of a gender-differentiated education stock was briefly discussed above. An age-differentiated stock is useful when the economic behavior being examined differs across the life cycle, as fertility or investments in child nutrition and health do. For example, the relevant education stock to consider when analyzing contraceptive use or children ever born might be the education stock of those women in their childbearing years, rather than the education stock of women of all ages.

The next sections describe our methodology and data sources for developing a cross-country education data series for 1960-87. Various assumptions used to

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fill in the gaps in primary data are outlined. We also present some summary statistics based on the new database.

Methodology

To construct an education stock series differentiated by age and sex, we start with the methodology used by Nehru, Swanson, and Dubey (1993) but modify it in three crucial aspects. First, we relax the assumption of the constancy of dropout rates across different grades and allow them to vary across grades. This enables us to take into account the fact that in developing countries the largest number of dropouts occur in the first two years of primary school and of secondary school and then tapers off. Second, the length of the primary and secondary school cycles are allowed to vary across countries. Appendix Table 1 presents the length of the primary and secondary education cycles for countries included in the series.[1] Third, we used gender-specific enrollment rates, dropout rates, repetition rates, mortality rates, and population. Because of the relative scarcity of gender-specific data for the tertiary education cycle, our data refers only to primary and secondary (or basic) education. Although this feature of the database might be limiting for OECD countries which have attained high education levels, it will be not be so for developing countries.[2]

In the methodology used here, the estimate of, say, female primary education stock in year T, S^F_{PT}, is arrived at by cumulating the completed school

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[1]The official primary school cycle in most countries span six years, but there are a few countries that can have as few as four years (e.g., Austria) or as many as nine years (e.g., El Salvador). Similarly, the secondary level which often has two cycles can have as few as three years (e.g., El Salvador) or as many as eight years (e.g., Austria). In some countries too, there have have been changes in the length of the cycles during the period included in the study. These changes have been duly reflected in our estimates.

[2]For users who need data on the years of higher education completed, we refer them to the Nehru-Swanson-Dubey database which used a similar methodology. These data for the tertiary cycle will not be differentiated by age or sex. users might also take note of a word of caution from the authors: "The greater use of 'statistically manufactured' gross enrollment data in creating the tertiary eduction stock series gives these data lower information and makes them less reliable in regression estimates" (Nehru, Swanson and Dubey 1993, p. 7).

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years of female students who started school between the years (T-64)+6 and (T-15)+6, where 64 and 15 represent the age limits of the labor force, and 6 is assumed to be the age of entry into school.[3] Based on the assumption that a second year spent in the same grade does not add to education stock, the estimate excludes years of schooling in which the student had repeated a grade. To make this correction, we assume that repetition rates reported across countries all pertain to the proportion of pupils who at the beginning of two consecutive school-years are enrolled in the same grade. Fredriksen (1983) points out that some countries define repetition differently, that is, as pupils who fail the examination at the end of given school year. We do not take account of these definitional disparities.

The treatment of intra-year dropout (or dropout during the year) is problematic in that the time of the year when it occurs determines whether the incomplete year should be counted or not. If a student drops out at the start of the school year, it would be reasonable to assume that that year does not augment education stock. But if the student drops out toward the end of the year, then it would be reasonable to assume that the year added to the education stock. Enrollment data may reflect intra-year dropout, depending on the date of the count. Early counts will tend to overestimate the number of students completing the grade, while late counts will be more accurate. For simplicity, we assume that students complete the year in which they are enrolled.

Suppose that $E^F_{g,t}$ is the number of female students in grade g in year t. Then N^F_{PT}, the total net enrollments of the fifty cohorts who entered primary school between years (T-64)+6 and (T-15)+6 (assuming that the number of years in the primary school cycle are n), is given by equation 1:

$$N^F_{PT} = \sum_{t=T-58}^{T-9} \sum_{g=1}^{n} E^F_{g,\,t-g-1} (1-r^F_{g,\,t}) (1-d^F_{g,\,t})$$

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[3]Hence, in year T, the oldest adult cohort we cover began school in year (T-64)+6, while the youngest adult cohort began in (T-15)+6.

where $r^F_{g,t}$ and $d^F_{g,t}$ are repetition and dropout rates, respectively, in grade g in year t. The equation gives the total number of completed school years at year T of those who went to primary school between the years T-58 and T-9 after netting out the number of repeaters and dropouts.

This estimate is then further adjusted to take account of expected losses to the stock due to mortality. Human capital is assumed to be durable and can only be lost through mortality; there is no depreciation of this capital while a person lives. Using the data on age-specific mortality data for different school cohorts entering school between the years T-58 and T-9, it is possible to construct the probabilities of survival until year T of these different cohorts. Let the probability of survival from year t through year T of enrollees in grade g in year t be given by $p^T_{g,t}$. The expected number of enrollees in year t surviving through year T is given by equation 2:

$$N^{*F}_{PT} = \sum_{t=T-58}^{T-9} \sum_{g=1}^{n} p_{g,\,t-g-1}^{F} E_{g,\,t-g-1}^{F} (1-r_{g,\,t}^{F})(1-d_{g,\,t}^{F})$$

This is the equation used to estimate the female education stock and is identical to that used to estimate the male education stock. The estimates of N^{*F}_{PT} and N^{*M}_{PT} are subsequently divided by the total number of women and men in the labor force, respectively, to obtain the average number of primary school years completed by women and men. Since the definition of labor force differs between countries and over time, we define the labor force simply as consisting of all individuals between the ages of 15 and 64, irrespective of their job-seeking behavior. This is not necessarily a shortcoming if the object is to characterize the potential skill level in the country.

The same procedure is used to obtain estimates of the mean number of secondary school years of women and men, N^{*F}_{ST} and N^{*M}_{ST}. To compute the age-differentiated education stock, equations 1 and 2 are modified with respect to the limits of the summation. For example, for the age cohort 15-24, the sum of school years at T will include the enrollment rates for those who started school between years (T-24)+6 and (T-15)+6.

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Data Sources

The data used to calculate average years of schooling come from a variety of sources. These sources are documented as fully as possible in Appendix Table 2. Most of the sources are ultimately based on a UNESCO publication; our principal data sources were:

o Educational statistics available through the World Bank Economic and Social Database;

o World Survey of Education, Volumes II (1958) and III (1961);

o Statistical Yearbook, several years; and

o Statesman Yearbook [???].

Through the International Standardization of Education Statistics adopted by the United Nations, which recommends specific definitions of primary and secondary education, international comparisons of education statistics should be possible. Primary education is defined as having as a main function "to provide the basic elements of education;" and education at the second level, "based upon at least four years' previous instruction at the first level, and providing general or specialized instruction" (UNESCO 1989, p. 2-1). However, there remains notable limitations in the data: First, there are substantial differences across countries in the coverage of the first two levels of education. For example, education at the second level may pertain to middle school, secondary school, high school, or to teacher training and technical training at this level. The first two level of education across countries could include as few as ten years or as many as fourteen years. In addition, many countries have two cycles at the secondary level, whereas others have only one. In most cases, we are able to include both cycles of secondary education, but as Appendix Table 1 indicates, the database sometimes provide data only for the first secondary cycle, or for an incomplete secondary cycle.

The perpetual inventory method used requires the aggregation of past enrollments. This implies that if the education stock series have to start from 1960, the enrollments need to be aggregated from 1902 onwards. We collected data

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on total enrollments from 1902 onwards for 50 countries and from 1930 onwards for 26 more. Six countries had data from 1950 and four had from 1960 onwards. Statistical extrapolation and interpolation methods were used to construct the missing data, though data search was undertaken with the objective of minimizing the need for these.

It was relatively difficult to find time-series data on gender-differentiated enrollment, even at the primary and secondary levels. Such data were available for 27 countries from 1937 onwards; for 21 countries, from 1947; and for 37, from 1950. Statistical methods were used to fill in the missing observations. The data from 1902 until the first year of available observation were constructed for all countries using the country specific growth rate of the ratio of female enrollments to total enrollments. Extreme care was taken to avoid calculating the growth rate over the periods in which unusual conditions (such as civil war or declaration of independence from a colonial power) can influence its magnitude.

While the use of constructed numbers in the estimates makes them imprecise, one factor that diminishes the statistical significance of this imprecision is that a large number of countries started out with a very low percentage of female students. This ratio rose during the forties and then increased significantly during the fifties and sixties, mirroring the historical experience of many developing countries which achieved freedom during this period and which subsequently expanded the opportunities for education of women. The constructed historical (before 1940) enrollment numbers thus have a much smaller effect on the final gender-specific estimates because of their small magnitude.

Data on other education variables were also difficult to find. Grade-specific repeater rates are available at five-year intervals between 1960 and 1985 for most countries. Using these data, annual rates for each grade were created through simple interpolation. The paucity of observations on grade-specific repeaters rates forced us to construct a single value for repeater rate that was used for each grade. The constructed value is a weighted average of grade specific repeater rates with the number of students in each grade serving

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as weights. Our simulations indicate that the final estimates of education stock are quite sensitive to the choice of rates to use. The dataset can be significantly improved by collecting more information on grade specific repeater rates.

One of the improvements of our dataset over the Nehru-Swanson-Dubey database is the use of grade-specific dropout rates. These rates were constructed using information on grade-specific enrollment and repeater rates. In most cases this provided a time series of dropout rates between 1965 and 1985. The missing observations during this period were filled through interpolation. The dropout rates in 1965 were used for all the earlier years, and the rates in 1985 were used for subsequent years.

Survival rates were constructed using sex- and cohort-specific mortality rates. Historical data for cohort-specific mortality rates are very difficult to come by and are available for a only a small set of countries. Hence survival probabilities were calculated for a representative country in each region. These probabilities were multiplied by crude death rates in each country of the region to obtain country-specific survival rates. The estimates of education are relatively insensitive to errors in mortality rates--an increase of 100% in mortality rates would reduce the education stock by 2-3 percent.

As with other education stock series, our data can be faulted for not reflecting two important pieces of information. First, our estimates of education stock have not been adjusted for the differences in the quality of education across countries. As such, they should be used with care for cross-country analysis. Studies find that in many low-income countries, even students who complete their education often fail to reach national or international standards of cognitive performance in mathematics, science, and reading comprehension (Lockheed, Verspoor and others 1991). Some studies (Barro 1991; Behrman and Rosenzweig 1992) have used teacher-student ratios as a proxy for the quality of education but do not find it to be a sufficiently good indicator of the value added of the school system. Second, each year of schooling implies different numbers of hours and days of schooling across

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countries. The official academic year for primary grades one through six averages 880 instructional hours, on average (Lockheed, Verspoor and others 1991). However, there is substantial variation among countries: the official academic year is much shorter than average in some (e.g., 610 hours in Ghana) and much longer in others (e.g., 1,070 hours in Morocco). Since research from a variety of countries has shown that the amount of time at task is consistently related to the amount of learning, these cross-country differences would affect the differences in education stock among them.

Education Stock of Men and Women

Table 1 summarizes the trend in years of schooling of men and women over a thirty-year period for OECD and five regions in the developing world.[4] Trends are seen both in the increase in educational attainment from 1960 to 1987 and in the differences in years of schooling across age cohorts. Overall, completed years of basic education have risen for both sexes, but especially for women. Table 2 presents the trend in the ratio of male education to female education. The education gender gap has narrowed substantially over the thirty-year period in developing countries, but is far from gone. A few observations from the data are the following:

- In OECD countries, although the youngest cohort has seen an increase in educational attainment, the aging of their populations has resulted in no increase between 1960 and 1987 in the average years of schooling of the total male population aged 15-64 years. Because of the much larger increases in the years of schooling among younger women, women's average years of schooling increased by an average of 0.5 percent each year. There is still an education gender gap in these countries, with the average years of schooling of men being 20 percent higher than for women, but this gap is only 10 percent among those aged 15-24.

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[4]Because of more severe limitations in data availability over a long time period, formerly centrally planned countries in Europe and many small island nations elsewhere are excluded from the data set.

• In developing countries, the average years of schooling rose by 4.7 percent annually between 1960 and 1987 for men and by 10.3 percent for women.[5] The largest growth is seen in Sub-Saharan African countries, for both men and women. Despite this growth, in 1987 this region still had the lowest average years of education. The smallest growth is seen in countries in Latin America and the Carribean, where the average years of schooling have been historically higher than in any other developing region. This slower growth has resulted in the education of adult males in this region being outpaced by that of men in East Asia and Pacific countries. In 1987, East Asian and Pacific men have the highest average years of schooling among the developing regions. Women in East Asia are catching up with, but have not overtaken, women in Latin America and the Caribbean.

• In all developing regions, the average years of schooling of women have risen by more than twice the rate at which the education stock of men has grown. The result has been a dramatic reduction in the gender gap during the period, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. The male education stock (for ages 15-64) was 424 percent greater than the female education stock in 1960 in Sub-Saharan African countries; in 1987, the male education stock was just less than double the female education stock. In the developing world taken together, in 1987 men aged 15-64 still have 80 percent more years of education than do women of the same ages. Among younger cohorts, however, the disparity is even smaller: men have 53 percent more years of schooling than do women.

The discussion above illustrates that there are substantial differences in the education levels of men and women and also that the magnitude of this gender gap varies among groups of countries. This was one of the reasons for developing a gender-differentiated education stock database. Another was that household-level studies have found women's education to have a larger effect on outcomes such as fertility and infant mortality rates, suggesting that men's and women's education must be considered separately. To examine this issue without having

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[5]For comparison, GDP rose at an average of 4.2 percent per year for 68 developing countries during the period 1960-87, according to the World Bank World Development Report of 1991.

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to develop and estimate a household behavior model, we estimated correlation coefficients between average education stock and a few development indicators (table 3). We also estimated correlation coefficients between the gender gap in education and these indicators (table 4).[6] We make the following additional observations from the data:

- In OECD countries, the correlation coefficients between average years of basic education and development indicators such as total fertility rate, infant mortality rates and a "liberties" index generally had the expected sign but were generally not statistically significant.[7] The correlation coefficients with GDP per capita were more significant but only for the Summers-Heston measure.[8]

- In developing countries, however, the correlation coefficients were all statistically significant. A higher education stock is associated with a lower total fertility rate and infant mortality rate, more liberties, and a higher per-capita GDP. The coefficients are also notably greater for female education stock than for male education.

- In OECD countries, the education gender gap is also not generally correlated with the development indicators. The exceptions are the coefficients for fertility which indicate that the larger the gap, the higher the fertility rate. Also an exception is the coefficient for infant mortality for the age group 35-44.

- In developing countries, the correlation coefficients between the education gender gap and the development indicators selected are all statistically significant at better than one percent level. A wider gender gap is associated with higher fertility and infant mortality rates, worse liberties,

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[6]Hill and King (1993) estimated a model which includes both the level of female education and the gender gap and found that while an increase in the level is associated with improved development indicators, a widening of the gender gap means a worsening of these indicators.

[7]The Gastil index refers to political and civil liberties; this runs from 1 (best case) to 7 (worst case).

[8]The Summers-Heston measure is a purchasing power adjusted measure of GDP, developed by Robert Summers and Alan Heston (1988).

and lower GDP per capita.

These results appear to support the findings of micro-level studies about the impact of women's education. However, several methodological issues need to be addressed before conclusions can be drawn. One, the association between education stock and fertility or mortality rates could simply be reflecting the correlation between education and GDP; thus, there may not be a significant direct effect of education stock on fertility or mortality. Simple correlations must be replaced by a model which takes account of the interrelationships between these different development indicators. Two, the correlation between education stock and GDP does not imply the direction of causation. Whereas economic growth models might consider human capital (i.e., education stock) as a productive factor, the level and growth of GDP also affects the accumulation of that stock. One way to address this issue is to use initial levels of or changes in the education stock in explaining subsequent growth rates of GDP and other development indicators.

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Table 1: Trends in Male and Female Educational Attainment by Region, 1960-1987
(Average Years of Primary and Secondary Education by Age Cohort and Sex)

	Males				Females			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64
OECD countries (21)								
1960	8.8	9.6	10.0	9.7	8.1	8.1	7.5	7.7
1970	8.9	9.0	9.4	9.5	8.5	8.0	8.0	8.0
1980	9.8	8.3	8.8	9.5	9.4	7.8	7.9	8.4
1987	10.5	9.2	8.6	9.6	10.3	8.6	8.0	8.7
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	0.7	-0.2	-0.5	-0.04	1.0	0.2	0.2	0.5
Sub Saharan Africa (22)								
1960	1.7	1.2	1.1	1.3	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3
1970	2.8	1.8	1.4	2.0	1.2	0.6	0.3	0.7
1980	3.7	3.0	2.0	2.8	2.2	1.3	0.6	1.3
1987	4.9	3.7	2.8	3.6	3.2	2.1	2.0	2.0
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	7.0	7.7	5.7	6.6	20.0	22.2	33.3	21.0
Middle East & North Africa (10)								
1960	2.8	2.7	2.2	2.5	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.8
1970	4.3	3.3	3.0	3.3	2.3	1.3	1.0	1.1
1980	6.4	4.5	3.4	4.6	4.1	2.4	1.3	2.5
1987	7.5	6.0	4.2	5.7	5.6	3.6	2.0	3.3
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	6.2	4.5	3.4	4.7	13.6	11.1	8.6	11.6
East Asia & Pacific (8)								
1960	3.6	2.2	2.0	2.5	1.5	0.7	0.5	0.8
1970	6.2	3.8	2.4	4.0	3.1	1.6	0.8	1.7
1980	8.0	6.4	3.9	5.6	5.0	3.2	1.7	3.0
1987	8.1	8.1	5.8	6.6	5.6	4.6	2.8	3.8
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	4.6	9.9	7.0	6.1	10.1	20.6	17.0	13.9

Table 1 Cont'd..

	Males				Females			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64
South Asia (4)								
1960	2.5	2.2	2.2	2.3	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.5
1970	4.2	2.6	2.4	3.1	2.0	0.9	0.5	1.1
1980	5.5	4.3	2.8	4.1	3.1	2.0	0.9	1.8
1987	6.2	5.3	4.1	4.9	3.6	2.9	1.7	2.4
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	*5.5*	*5.2*	*3.2*	*4.2*	*13.0*	*17.8*	*12.0*	*14.1*
Latin America & the Carribean (19)								
1960	4.1	3.8	3.5	3.8	3.1	2.6	2.2	2.5
1970	4.5	4.2	4.0	4.2	4.1	3.1	2.7	3.2
1980	5.6	4.7	4.4	4.9	5.4	3.9	3.3	4.1
1987	7.1	5.4	4.7	5.6	7.0	4.9	3.8	5.0
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	*2.7*	*1.6*	*1.3*	*1.8*	*4.6*	*3.3*	*2.7*	*3.7*
Developing Countries (63)								
1960	3.1	2.3	2.2	2.5	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.9
1970	5.0	3.3	2.5	3.5	2.7	1.4	0.9	1.6
1980	6.6	5.2	3.4	4.8	4.2	2.7	1.5	2.6
1987	7.1	6.2	4.8	5.7	5.0	3.8	2.4	3.4
Annual growth 1960-87 (%)	*4.8*	*6.3*	*4.4*	*4.7*	*9.5*	*13.9*	*11.1*	*10.3*

Note:

(1) See Appendix Table 3 for list of countries in each group.

(2) These averages are weighted by size of population aged 15-64 of each country, by sex.

Table 2: Trends in Education Gender Gap by Region, 1960-87

Regions	Age Cohorts			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64
OECD				
1960	1.11	1.24	1.44	1.34
1970	1.10	1.14	1.23	1.23
1980	1.05	1.10	1.18	1.16
1987	1.10	1.18	1.24	1.20
Sub-Saharan Africa				
1960	3.97	6.62	11.74	5.24
1970	2.55	4.01	6.56	3.24
1980	1.86	2.59	4.05	2.32
1987	1.65	2.01	2.96	1.96
Middle East & North Africa				
1960	2.70	3.76	5.23	3.45
1970	1.96	2.87	3.86	2.50
1980	1.65	1.98	2.87	1.96
1987	1.47	1.73	2.20	1.73
East Asia & Pacific				
1960	2.67	3.90	5.75	3.88
1970	2.06	2.66	3.89	2.57
1980	1.62	2.05	2.65	1.97
1987	1.46	1.79	2.16	1.75
South Asia				
1960	3.19	5.03	7.19	4.85
1970	2.23	3.16	4.99	3.05
1980	1.86	2.21	3.14	2.31
1987	1.78	1.91	2.48	2.07
Latin America & the Carribean				
1960	1.36	1.62	1.92	1.63
1970	1.14	1.43	1.63	1.38
1980	1.05	1.22	1.40	1.21
1987	1.01	1.12	1.24	1.12
Developing Countries				
1960	2.81	4.24	6.32	4.03
1970	2.05	2.81	4.22	2.64
1980	1.65	2.06	2.81	2.02
1987	1.53	1.77	2.25	1.80

Note:

(1) The education gender gap is defined as the ratio of male education stock to female education stock.

(2) These averages are weighted by size of population aged 15-64 of each country.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients of Average Years of Education and Development Indicators, 1985

	Males				Females			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64
OECD countries (21)								
Total fertility	-0.35[b]	-0.35[b]	-0.48[b]	-0.41[b]	-0.73[b]	-0.62[b]	-0.70[b]	-0.61[b]
Infant mortality	-0.50[b]	-0.50[b]	-0.58[b]	-0.54[b]	-0.83[a]	-0.74[b]	-0.80[a]	-0.75[b]
Gastil index	-0.61[b]	-0.64[b]	-0.67[b]	0.66[b]	-0.86[a]	-0.84[a]	-0.86[a]	-0.86[a]
GDP per capita								
Summers-Heston	0.81[a]	0.81[a]	0.69[b]	0.76[b]	0.86[a]	0.86[a]	0.82[a]	0.92
Constant US$	0.77[b]	0.78[b]	0.67[b]	0.74[b]	0.78[b]	0.82[a]	0.76[b]	0.87[a]
Developing Countries (63)								
Total fertility	-0.66	-0.57	-0.57	-0.63	-0.77	-0.77	-0.72	-0.76
Infant mortality	-0.76	-0.72	-0.69	-0.75	-0.87	-0.85	-0.75	-0.85
Gastil index	-0.36	-0.39	-0.43	-0.43	-0.58	-0.62	-0.59	-0.62
GDP per capita								
Summers-Heston	0.54	0.46	0.38	0.45	0.68	0.61	0.45	0.57
Constant US$	0.44	0.38	0.28[a]	0.35	0.55	0.51	0.33	0.44

Notes: (1) All correlation are significant at or better than 1 percent level, except when marked as:

[a] Significant at or better than 5 percent level.

[b] Not significant at 5 percent level.

(2) The gastil index of civil and political literties ranges from best (1) case to worst (7) case. The Humana index of human rights from worst (13) case to best (96) case.

(3) Developing countries group excludes formerly centrally planned economies.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients of Education Gender Gap and Development Indicators, 1985

	Education gender gap (Male years of schooling/Female years of schooling)			
	15-24	25-34	35-44	15-64
OECD countries (21)				
Total fertility	0.77ᵃ/	0.86	0.85	0.64ᵇ/
Infant mortality	0.67ᵇ/	0.79ᵇ/	0.82ᵃ/	0.62ᵇ/
Gastil index	0.50ᵇ/	0.67ᵇ/	0.70ᵇ/	0.53ᵇ/
GDP per capita				
Summers-Heston	-0.06ᵇ/	-0.24ᵇ/	-0.41ᵇ/	-0.29ᵇ/
Constant US$	0.02ᵇ/	-0.18ᵇ/	-0.30ᵇ/	-0.21ᵇ/
Developing Countries (63)				
Total fertility	0.58	0.66	0.67	0.64
Infant mortality	0.73	0.72	0.66	0.74
Gastil index	0.57	0.61	0.61	0.61
GDP per capita				
Summers-Heston	-0.51	-0.50	-0.46	-0.52
Constant US$	-0.41	-0.39	-0.30	-0.39

Notes: (1) All correlation are significant at or better than 1 percent level, except when marked as:
   ᵃ/ Significant at or better than 5 percent level.
   ᵇ/ Not significant at 5 percent level.

(2) See notes in table 3/ for definition of gastil humana indexes.

(3) Developing countries group excludes formerly centrally planned economies.

Appendix Table: 1
Number of Years Per School Cycle
Used in Estimate of Education Stock

Country	Primary School		Secondary School	
ALGERIA	6		4	(4,3)
ANGOLA	5	(4)	5	(4,2)
ARGENTINA	7		5	
AUSTRALIA	6		6	(3,2)
AUSTRIA	4		8	
BANGLADESH	5		7	
BELGIUM	6		6	
BOLIVIA	8		4	
BRAZIL .	8		3	
BURUNDI	5		6	(4,3)
CAMEROON	6		4	
CANADA	6		6	
CHILE	8		4	
CHINA	5		6	(3,2)
COLOMBIA	5		6	
COSTA RICA	6		5	(5,3)
COTE D'IVOIRE	6		4	(4,3)
CYPRUS	6		6	
DENMARK	6		6	
ECUADOR	6		6	
EGYPT	6		6	
EL SALVADOR	6		6	
ETHIOPIA	6		5	(2,4)
FINLAND	6		6	
FRANCE	5		7	
GERMANY	4		9	
GHANA	6		4	(4,3)
GREECE	6		6	
GUATEMALA	6		6	
HAITI	6		6	
HONDURAS	6		5	
HONG KONG	6		5	(5,2)
ICELAND	6		6	(3,4)
INDIA	5		6	(3,4)
INDONESIA	6		6	
IRAN	5		7	
IRAQ	6		6	
IRELAND	6		6	(3,2)
ISRAEL	8		4	
ITALY	5		8	
JAMAICA	6		5	(3,4)
JAPAN	6		6	
JORDAN	6		6	
KENYA	7	(8)	4	(5)
KOREA	6		6	
LIBERIA	6		6	
MADAGASCAR	5		4	(4,3)
MALAWI	7		4	

Appendix Table: 1 cont'd..

Country	Primary School		Secondary School	
MALAYSIA	6		5	(3,4)
MALI	6		3	(3,3)
MAURITIUS	5	(6)	5	(3,4)
MEXICO	6		6	
MOROCCO	5		7	
MOZAMBIQUE	4	(5)	7	
NETHERLANDS	6	(8)	6	
NEW ZEALAND	6		6	(4,3)
NIGERIA	6		5	(3,3)
NORWAY	6		6	
PAKISTAN	5		7	
PANAMA	6		6	
PARAGUAY	6		6	
PERU	6		5	
PHILIPPINES	6		4	
PORTUGAL	6		6	
RWANDA	8		3	(6)
SENEGAL	6		3	(4,3)
SIERRA LEONE	7		5	(5,2)
SINGAPORE	6		5	(4,2)
SPAIN	5		6	(3,4)
SRI LANKA	6		5	(5,2)
SUDAN	6		6	
SWEDEN	6		6	
SWITZERLAND	6		6	(3,4)
SYRIA	6		5	(3,3)
TANZANIA	7		4	(4,2)
THAILAND	7		6	
TUNISIA	6		6	(3,4)
TURKEY	5		6	
UGANDA	7		4	(4,2)
UNITED KINGDOM	6		6	(3,4)
URUGUAY	6		6	
USA	8		4	
VENEZUELA	6		5	
ZAIRE	6		6	
ZAMBIA	7		4	(2,3)
ZIMBABWE	7		4	(6)

Notes: Numbers in the parentheses give the lengths of the primary and secondary education levels as indicated in the 1989 UNESCO publication, when these differ from those given in the BESD database on enrollments. Two cycles are often shown for the secondary level. Changes which occurred in a few countries——Mozambique since 1987; Rwanda since 1975 not reflected in the database. Reasons for other discrepancies are not known except that data reported for the secondary level appear to have been limited to the first cycle in countries where this level has two cycles. Source of data: UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1989; World Bank, BESD Database, 1992.

Appendix Table: 2
Data Sources And Assumptions About Repetition Rates, Grade 1
Enrollments and Mortality Rates in Constructiong
Gender-Differented Education Data

	Repeater Rates Females Starting Year of Data(1)		First Grade Females First Year of Observation (2)	Mortality Rates Females Years and Reference countries (3)
ALGERIA	Primary	1975	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
ANGOLA (4)	Primary	1975	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (20)	(26)
ARGENTINA	Primary	1965	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(28)
AUSTRALIA (5)	Primary	1965	1965	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1974	(30)
AUSTRIA	Primary	1965	1960 (24)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)
BANGLADESH (6,14)	Primary	1965	1981	(33)
	Secondary	1965	1975 (18)	(33)
BELGIUM (5)	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1973	(30)
BOLIVIA (7)	Primary	1965	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (21)	(28)
BRAZIL	Primary	1970	1971	(29)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (21)	(29)
CAMEROON	Primary	1975	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
CANADA (8)	Primary	1970	1960	(31)
	Secondary	1965	1971	(31)
CHILE	Primary	1970	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (21)	(28)
CHINA (6,14)	Primary	1965	1970 (17)	(36)
	Secondary	1965	1976 (17)	(36)
COLOMBIA	Primary	1960	1960 (21)	(28)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(28)
COSTA RICA	Primary	1960	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1980	(28)
COTE D'IVOIRE	Primary	1975	1960	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
CYPRUS (9)	Primary	1970	1960 (22)	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (22)	(26)
DENMARK	Primary	1965	1965	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)
ECUADOR (7)	Primary	1965	1960 (21)	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1960 (21)	(28)

Appendix Table: 2 cont'd..

	Repeater Rates Females Starting Year of Data(1)		First Grade Females First Year of Observation (2)	Mortality Rates Females Years and Reference countries (3)
EGYPT	Primary	1970	1960	(27)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(27)
EL SALVADOR	Primary	1965	1965	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (21)	(28)
ETHIOPIA (10,15)	Primary	1975	1960	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(26)
FINLAND (5)	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(30)
FRANCE	Primary	1970	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1975	1976	(30)
GERMANY	Primary	1970	1960 (24)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(30)
GHANA (10,15)	Primary	1970	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (20)	(26)
GREECE	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)
GUATEMALA	Primary	1965	1965	(28)
	Secondary	1970	1971	(28)
HAITI	Primary	1965	1977	(28)
	Secondary	1975	1976	(28)
HONG KONG (11)	Primary	1975	1970 (17)	(36)
	Secondary	1970	1975 (17)	(36)
HONDURAS (7)	Primary	1965	1960 (21)	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (21)	(28)
INDIA ,(14)	Primary	1965	1981 (19)	(33)
	Secondary	1965	1975 (18)	(33)
INDONESIA	Primary	1975	1977	(36)
	Secondary	1965	1976	(36)
IRAN (12)	Primary	1965	1960 (23)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (23)	(26)
IRAQ (12)	Primary	1965	1960 (23)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (23)	(26)
IRELAND (8)	Primary	1970	1974	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(30)
ISRAEL (12)	Primary	1965	1972	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (22)	(26)
ITALY	Primary	1965	1960 (24)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)

Appendix Table: 2 cont'd..

	Repeater Rates Females Starting Year of Data(1)		First Grade Females First Year of Observation (2)	Mortality Rates Females Years and Reference countries (3)
JAMAICA	Primary	1975	1974	(28)
	Secondary	1970	1972	(28)
JAPAN	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)
JORDAN (12)	Primary	1965	1960 (23)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (23)	(26)
KENYA ,(15)	Primary	1970	1960	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(26)
KOREA, REP.	Primary	1965	1970	(36)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(36)
LIBERIA (4)	Primary	1975	1970	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
MADAGASCAR	Primary	1965	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
MALAWI	Primary	1975	1970	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (20)	(26)
MALAYSIA	Primary	1965	*1965	(36)
	Secondary	1965	1977 (16)	(36)
MALI (4)	Primary	1975	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (20)	(26)
MAURITIUS	Primary	1965	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1970	1970	(26)
MEXICO	Primary	1965	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1975	1973	(28)
MOROCCO	Primary	1965	1960 (22)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
MYANMAR, (14)	Primary	1965	1979 (18)	(33)
	Secondary	1965	1979 (18)	(33)
MOZAMBIQUE (4)	Primary	1975	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (20)	(26)
NETHERLANDS	Primary	1970	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(30)
NEW ZEALAND	Primary	1965	1965 (25)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1973	(30)
NIGERIA (4)	Primary	1975	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
NORWAY	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1972	(30)

Appendix Table: 2 cont'd..

	Repeater Rates Females Starting Year of Data(1)		First Grade Females First Year of Observation (2)	Mortality Rates Females Years and Reference countries (3)
PAKISTAN (6,14)	Primary	1965	1981 (19)	(33)
	Secondary	1965	1975 (18)	(33)
PANAMA	Primary	1965	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1970	1970	(28)
PARAGUAY (13)	Primary	1970	1960 (21)	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (21)	(28)
PERU	Primary	1970	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (21)	(28)
PHILIPPINES	Primary	1965	1970 (17)	(37)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (16)	(37)
PORTUGAL	Primary	1965	1970	(30)
	Secondary	1970	1970	(30)
RWANDA	Primary	1965	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
SENEGAL	Primary	1965	1960	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
SIERRA LEONE (4)	Primary	1975	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1965 (20)	(26)
SINGAPORE (11)	Primary	1975	1970 (17)	(36)
	Secondary	1970	1975 (17)	(36)
SPAIN	Primary	1965	1975	(30)
	Secondary	1975	1973	(30)
SRI LANKA	Primary	1970	1979	(34)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(34)
SUDAN	Primary	1970	1970	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(26)
SWEDEN	Primary	1965	1960	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1975	(30)
SWITZERLAND (8)	Primary	1970	1960 (24)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1973 (24)	(30)
SYRIA	Primary	1965	1970	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
TAIWAN (6,14)	Primary	1965	1970 (17)	(36)
	Secondary	1965	1976 (17)	(36)
TANZANIA	Primary	1975	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
THAILAND	Primary	1975	1980	(36)
	Secondary	1975	1976 (16)	(36)

Appendix Table: 2 cont'd..

	Repeater Rates Females		First Grade Females	Mortality Rates Females
	Starting Year of Data(1)		First Year of Observation (2)	Years and Reference countries (3)
TUNISIA (4)	Primary	1975	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (20)	(26)
TURKEY	Primary	1965	1960 (22)	(30)
	Secondary	1970	1970	(30)
UGANDA	Primary	1970	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(26)
UNITED KINGDOM (8)	Primary	1965	1960 (24)	(30)
	Secondary	1965	1973 (24)	(30)
UNITED STATES	Primary	1965	1965	(32)
	Secondary	1965	1970	(32)
URUGUAY (13)	Primary	1970	1960 (21)	(28)
	Secondary	1965	1970 (21)	(28)
VENEZUELA	Primary	1965	1960	(28)
	Secondary	1970	1975	(28)
ZAIRE	Primary	1970	1965	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(26)
ZAMBIA (10,15)	Primary	1970	1965 (20)	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970 (20)	(26)
ZIMBABWE (10,15)	Primary	1970	1970	(26)
	Secondary	1975	1970	(26)

Notes:

(1)	All the Information is from the World Bank Economic and Social Database (BESD).
(2)	All the Information is from the World Bank Economic and Social Database.
(3)	The mortality tables have been taken from the United Nations Demographic Yearbook. The various issues are from the years:1945,1950,1952,1955,1956,1958,1960,1963,1965,1966,1970,1972,1975,1978,1980, 1982,1985.
(4)	Repeater rate of Cote D'Ivoire has been use for Angola, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia.
(5)	Repeater rate of Austria has been used for Australia, Belgium and Finland.
(6)	Repeater rate of India has been used for Bangladesh, Taiwan, China, and Pakistan.
(7)	Repeater rate of Argentina has been used for Bolivia, Ecuador and Honduras.
(8)	Repeater rate of Germany has been used for Canada, Switzerland, Great Britain and Ireland.
(9)	Repeater rate of Egypt has been used for Cyprus.
(10)	Repeater rate of Kenya has been used for Ethiopia, Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
(11)	Repeater rate for Indonesia has been used for Hong Kong and Singapore.
(12)	The repeater rate for Syria has been used for Iran, Iraq, Israel and Jordan.
(13)	The repeater rate for Brazil has been used for Paraguay and Uraguay.
(14)	The secondary repeater rate for Sri Lanka has been used for Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, China, Taiwan, Pakistan.
(15)	The secondary repeater rate for Sudan has been used for Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Zambia.
(16)	The correspondingt value for Indoneasia has been used.
(17)	The corresponding value for Korea has been used.
(18)	The corresponding value for Sri Lanka has been used.
(19)	The corresponding value for Bangladesh has been used.
(20)	The corresponding values for Cote D'Ivoire have been used.
(21)	The corresponding values for Argentina have been used.
(22)	The corresponding values for Egypt have been used.
(23)	The corresponding values for Syria have been used.
(24)	The corresponding value for Belgium has been used.

Appendix Table: 2 cont'd..

(25)   The corresponding value for Australia has been used.

(26)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for Egypt have been used.

(27)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1935, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 82.

(28)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for Brazil have been used.

(29)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1945, 50,55, 65, 68, 74, 80,85.
                        The others were interpolated.

(30)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for France have been used.

(31)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1935, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 82.

(32)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for United States have been used.

(33)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1935, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 82.

(34)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for Sri Lanka have been used.

(35)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1945, 50, 55, 58, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85.

(36)   The correspnding cohort specific mortality rates for Phillipines have been used.

(37)   The cohort specific mortality rates for the following years are available:1945, 50, 55, 58, 65, 70, 75, 80, 85.

Appendix Table 3: List of Countries by Region

Regions	Countries
OECD	Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Finland, United Kingdom, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, United States
Sub-Sahahran Africa	Angola, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Mauritius, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sudan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uruguay, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Middle East & North Africa	Cyprus, Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia
East Asia & the Pacific	Burundi, China, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand
South Asia	Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan
America & the Caribbean	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Paraguay, El Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela

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Division for the Advancement of Women
Secretariat for the Fourth World Conference on Women

EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON
GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

International Training Centre of the ILO
Turin, Italy

10-14 October 1994

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Education and Training, which is
organized under the auspices of the United Nations, is part of the on-going
preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women and will contribute
to the elaboration of the Platform for Action, its final document. The Fourth
World Conference on Women in Beijing 1995 will consider the education of
girls and women as one major topic. In the draft Platform for Action, one of
the ten critical areas of concern is "inequality in access to education, health
and related services and means of maximising the use of women's capacities"
(see copy attached). It is recognized that education is a key to development.
Educating women has a major impact on social change and is a worthwhile
investment. The draft Platform for Action sets out strategic objectives
deriving from the critical areas of concern and action to be taken. Ensuring
women's access to quality education and training for self-reliance at all levels
and in all fields and sectors is the overall goal. As the draft Platform for
Action is recommending action to be applied in many parts of the world, its
scope may seem general and broad. Therefore, governments will have to adapt
the Platform for Action to their particular national and local circumstances.

Experts are invited to comment on the strategic objectives and proposed action
contained in the draft Platform for Action as elaborated by the Commission on
the Status of Women at its thirty-eighth session in 1994. Experts are asked to
comment on the choice of strategic objectives and to recommend concrete
actions.

Three major topics have been identified for the Expert Group Meeting: a)
Rationale for girls' education b) Strategic resource allocation and c) Quality of
girls' education and training. One of the main challenges for the future is to
accelerate female education on a cost-effective basis. Commitments are needed
by governments in tangible forms either through resource allocation or more
adequate deployment of facilities. The first principle would be a political
commitment by governments in favour of girls' education.

In line with these major issues, experts are invited to take into consideration
the following questions when drafting their papers (6-8 pages minimum).

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Question 1

What do you consider to be the main obstacles that keep girls from attending and completing their education and/or training in
a) primary school
b) secondary school
c) higher education
d) vocational, technical and other training.
Please indicate where constraints and obstacles differ by region, level of development or commitment to female education. Is there a need for appropriate gender-disaggregated statistics and methodological tools?

Question 2

Which system-wide improvements would benefit girls most and equip them to cope with their changing economic and social environment? Which resource allocation decisions need to be taken? Describe innovative and cost-effective strategies that can increase
a) female enrolment and access
b) quality and curriculum relevance
c) attainment and performance.

Please comment on types of projects and methods that ensure effectiveness, sustainablity, appropriateness and/or replicability.

Question 3

How can a participatory process be built in at various levels regarding
a) students' commitment
b) parents' involvement
c) women leaders' involvement in educational decision-making, policy, planning and management - at community and national level?

Question 4

What strategies can be used to increase motivation and provide basic literacy and technical training
a) for girls out of formal schooling
b) for adult women.
What strategies for female education and training are effective in countries with poor learning environments (such as information campaigns, increased awareness not only at the teacher's level but also within the family and in society at large)? Give examples of success stories and failures.

3

Question 5

Describe methods that can improve the quality of female education. What is
the process to address gender concerns? Which strategies that included a
gender perspective in educational planning have been most effective? What
would you consider a positive and sustained political commitment? What is the
driving force behind policy decisions in education and how can the driving
force be changed and influenced? How to address the existing discrepancies
between the formal educational system and the patterns of women's lives and
daily activities?

Question 6

The Expert Group Meeting will consider the needs of the cohort of girls aged
12-25 years, especially those that have left the formal education system.   What
specific measures would you single out as critical to bring about an increase in
quality education for females in the age group 12-25 years (from your
experience and independently from the draft Platform for Action)? Name five
priority measures that could be implemented in the next five years.

WOMEN

Published to promote the goals
of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies
for the Advancement of Women

2000

No. 1, 1994

WOMEN IN EXTREME POVERTY

Photo by: International Labour Organization

WOMEN IN EXTREME POVERTY

Background

Traditionally the focus in poverty alleviation policies has been on the rural poor, but there has been a recent shift of focus in response to the increasing global urbanization, a feature that is especially striking in developing countries. The effects of the world-wide recession combined with an ever-increasing number of urban poor has produced a new phenomenon that demands that poverty be approached from a more general perspective. However there has until now been little emphasis on the issues relating to women in extreme poverty, although they represent a growing percentage of the population. More recently, as female-headed households have increased so has the realization that the needs of such women have not been addressed, and that traditional development approaches have done little to improve their lot. Therefore a new women-oriented geography has emerged, which will provide a new perspective on the situation of women, and in particular on the role that poor women play in the urban environment.

The new approach: putting poverty from a gender perspective on the development agenda

Within the United Nations system, there is a new consensus on how to achieve the effective mobilization and integration of women into development. There is a growing realization that in order to alleviate poverty and to achieve sustainable development, it is necessary to move on from women in development (WID) to approaches that emphasize gender relations. While a WID approach seeks to make women visible and accepts the existing development framework, whether it is unsustainable or not, a gender-aware approach seeks to make gender relations visible in order to identify how to make the development process more equal and sustainable. A gender approach therefore challenges the existing development framework, with a view to creating a more sustainable development paradigm. These ideas have been discussed and further developed at the seminars on women in development and women in extreme poverty, which were organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women at Vienna in December 1992 and November 1993 respectively.

Women are major actors in the fight for survival. When men lose their paid employment, it is usually the women who draw on their endless personal resources to maintain an existence, however basic. The energy and resourcefulness with which many women find ways of surviving and of feeding their households is what keeps millions of poor people in the world alive, and yet these resources and capabilities have rarely been recognized as the foundation that enables other levels of the economy to function. Informal work, particularly that carried out by women, needs to be acknowledged as a significant part of the economy.

On the one hand, the picture is disturbing (population growth and an increasing proportion of poor) and time seems to be running out if the targets of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women 1/ are to be met before the deadline of 2000. On the other hand, it is encouraging that new thinking is being applied to an old problem, and that gender-related factors are now acknowledged as central to the obstacles hindering development and are now well established in all discussions and conferences, instead of being relegated to the category of women's problems.

After three decades of development assistance, there is now a shift in focus. There is a

realization that analysis at the national level and of the official statistics - the gross national products (GNP) or the gross domestic product (GDP) - is revealing only a part of the real picture. There is an increasing demand from all sides, but in particular from many non-governmental organizations who have been working in the front line of poverty, to recognize the informal sector, dominated often by the unseen work of women. At the grass roots, millions of women have always been working, feeding and supporting their families and supplementing their household income by tending small plots of land or by trading, but without ever appearing in official statistics. These women working in the informal sector have not only remained hidden by not being featured in the formal employment statistics, but they have also usually maintained this work without access to training or loans, but nevertheless providing a crucial support base for the rest of the economy. It is time to ensure not only that women have more access to formal employment, training and loans, but also that the informal work they do appears in the statistics.

At the grass-roots level (and the meaning is literal for the millions of women who are bent over all day tending their scarce crops), women who are experiencing hunger or who are combing through rubbish dumps in order to feed their families probably do not feel that great advances have been made, or that anyone at the national or international level cares about their struggle to survive, but awareness of the real needs of women and men living in this situation is increasing. It is encouraging that gender awareness is no longer a vague concept to be heard only in the environs of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women or at the Commission on the Status of Women; it now features throughout the United Nations system, is integrated into all development programmes and is finally being given the attention that it warrants.

Situations of extreme poverty are also receiving considerable global attention, and specifically the role of women in relation to poverty, yet the solutions remain somewhat elusive. The effects of extreme poverty have been clearly identified and present an alarming picture, especially to those who are lucky enough to live in affluent societies where situations of extreme physical poverty can no longer be witnessed on the doorstep. (Although there is increasing evidence of an erosion in social welfare in some highly industrialized countries and, with the increasing unemployment brought about by the economic recession, more people seem to be slipping through the social net and into real poverty.)

Despite the obvious results of poverty and the shock effect of seeing children eating out of rubbish bins, or picking through refuse dumps, the causes of poverty are complex, and vary from one culture to another. An analysis of the subject requires an understanding of many interrelated issues and therefore a coordinated approach from many disciplines is needed to see how the different factors interact with each other. The solution requires a real commitment from all the different levels of policy-making to effect some improvement urgently.

If the alarming projections for population growth - from 5.5 to 10 billion by 2050 - turn out to be accurate, unless there is a change in present trends, the number of persons living in poverty, currently estimated to be 1 billion, could rise to an alarming 2 or 3 billion. It is time for urgent measures and to heed such warnings as the one given by the Director of UNIFEM in her statement to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session:

"We are nurturing a time bomb. Reducing efforts to eliminate poverty is a short sighted exercise in denial. Indeed, the cumulative effect of international poverty, its fallout if you will, if unchecked, severely limits everyone's options for the future."

Poverty cannot be isolated as a purely economic feature since its causes and effects are so diverse. Issues of human rights, of health and nutrition, of customs and traditions, of environmental influences, indeed all the political, legal, social, cultural and historical conditions that combine to create poverty must be considered. Without this wider understanding the solutions will not appear. It is therefore crucial to find the common threads linking these different contributing factors and a significant one of these is gender discrimination.

Nor can poverty be treated as yet another of those natural disasters that, in the developed world, television producers choose to splash on the screens at periodic intervals to jog the viewers' consciences and make them reach for their purses. Charity donations are a drop in the ocean and poverty is not a short-term natural disaster. When drought occurs and famine ensues, people start to die in large numbers and it is essential to provide money and supplies urgently to reach those people; however, it should also be realized that the drought was only the last straw. Many of these people live on the edge of hunger, in extreme poverty, all their lives. They are on a knife-edge, existing from day to day thanks mainly to the efforts of women who use all their energies to provide a fragile existence. This is a hard, but precarious world and, what people in some of the affluent countries in the North conveniently tend to forget, once the pictures are no longer being beamed into their sitting-room, is that there is a fine between the extreme poverty that represents the daily existence of millions of the world's population and disaster and death.

While it is necessary to recognize that this depressing situation is a reality for hundreds of millions of people, and that it has been a global problem for many years, it is also important to realize that there is new hope and that solutions are relatively simple. The past 20 years of research and analysis, with the focus on women, has led to an understanding of the underlying causes of poverty, and has pointed to the solutions. With international and national will committed to increasing the participation of the hidden masses in the process of sustainable development and sufficient funds to provide the necessary access to education; appropriate trading opportunities; loans on reasonable terms; clean water; decent housing; health facilities etc., poverty could finally be eradicated. The upbeat tone of the Human Development Report, 1993,[2] is a reminder that the cold war is over and that military spending is declining; therefore, it is time to use defence cuts to finance human development.

Making visible the invisible

The issues surrounding women living in developing countries in or on the edge of poverty - women who are usually working in the informal sector - are the focus of a book published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In her introduction, the editor, Joycelin Massiah, asks:

> *"Why are we, in 1989, still asking the same questions we asked in 1975 at the beginning of the UN Decade for Women? ... Women in development is now firmly entrenched on the agenda of international donor agencies. ... Yet, planning authorities are still reluctant to accept gender as a development planning issue."* [3]
> Joycelin Massiah

Chapter III of the book is entitled, "The survival strategies of poor families in Ghana and the role of women therein", by Vicky Okine, and provides a clear description, not only of the important role of women in the country's economy, through their leading role in the informal sector, but also how, without them, many households could not survive.

"The majority of them are small-holders producing on a very small scale and relatively unaffected by developments in the use of improved tools and seeds. Their involvement in agricultural production is often a struggle to provide enough just for their households. This does not encourage savings against future consumption, against economic shocks and other hazards. Yields are low and highly determined by the weather, yet women are denied necessary support by the state. Modern inputs, where available, are too expensive for them. The uncertainties in their environment make it too risky to try new methods of production. They are caught up in a typically 'no exit situation in which poor people, especially women, are trapped' [4]." 5/

The profile below describes the daily existence of just one urban-based woman living in Accra, but illustrates the problems common to many. Many such women are illiterate or semi-literate, and an increasing number have broken marriages leaving them as the heads of their households. In some households, all the women are engaged in trading in order to maintain a subsistence level.

"Madame Faustina, otherwise called Auntie Fausti is 35 years old and has had partial elementary school education. She lives with her second husband with whom she has one child. She had three children from her first marriage ... her husband lost his job and the whole family has since had to depend on her enterprise to survive.

"She learnt how to sew but could afford neither a sewing machine nor rent a place for sewing because she could not find the necessary capital to start.

"She initially started trading in plantain but had to stop because of financial difficulties. She now sells fish. It is not too profitable but at least she did not need much money to start; and at the end of the day she has money to buy food for her family.

"She is well known by the people from the village who supply her fish. She therefore buys on credit. She goes to buy the fish on Wednesdays and returns to Accra on Fridays to sell what she could procure. She, in turn, credits the fish to her customers. By the following Tuesday, all those who bought some of her fish will have paid. The cycle thus begins again with another journey to the fishing village. Auntie Fausti says she does not use any of the fish she sells because it is too expensive for her. They cost between 600 to 1,000 cedis each while she spends about 100 cedis on fish for her family.

"From her sales she is able to obtain an average weekly income of 3,000 cedis. This is what she and her household live on. Apart from selling fish she has no other job.

"Auntie Fausti does not have a stall and she does not want to be arrested and to have her fish seized. Accordingly, she goes around the market in the evenings - after 4.00 pm [when the police are not on duty] to sell her fish on credit. She has to be extra careful about the way she organizes the sales.

"She gets home quite late - sometimes after 8.00 pm. By this time, the elder child would have to take care of the younger ones.

"Her situation is typically desperate. She sums up as follows: 'All the money I make I have to struggle really hard for'. She nevertheless believes that one day she can make it. 'God's time is the best', she said." 6/

The significance of this example is not to illustrate extreme poverty. There are millions of women and men living in more extreme circumstances, with no possibilities for receiving regular income from trade, however it does serve to show the vulnerability of the poor and in particular of women and their daughters burdened with domestic duties and with no chance to improve their productivity. Mme. Faustina is surviving and sustaining her family, however this sustenance is fragile. There is no security and should her credit supplies be stopped, or the police choose to hinder her trading because of avoidance of trading tax, or should she fall ill, she and her family would be destitute. However, there is hope for improvement.

Although millions of people are living at this most basic subsistence level and working such long hours that there is no time left for anything but work, with appropriately designed programmes, they could easily be helped to reach another level. They are now in a survival trap and without specific projects that provide them with better trading opportunities, or with access to transport, or to cooperatives or credit to improve their service, they will remain on this most basic level of subsistence.

A couple of success stories described in Jeanne Vickers' book, Women and the World Economic Crisis, 7/ illustrate how effective low-cost, carefully designed interventions can be. They are summarized as follows:

Chorker fish smokers developed in Ghana, and used now in other countries, can smoke 10 times more fish than traditional smokers using the same amount of firewood. Assuming that the female operators have access to markets for their increased productivity, the advantages are obvious, not only to the women but also to the environment

The Kenyan Water for Health Organization working with the Ngusuria community built a safe-water system that eliminated the need for women to walk 14 kilometres, a task that could take up to seven hours daily. It also provided power for a maize mill and other improvements, which not only gave women time to attend courses in literacy, child and health care, but also saved them money.

Priority theme under the heading of development: women in extreme poverty

The Economic and Social Council established, by its resolution 1990/15, the priority themes for each session of the Commission on the Status of Women to be held during the period 1993-1996. The theme for the thirty-seventh session held at Vienna, in March 1993, under the heading "Development" was: "Women in extreme poverty: integration of women's concerns in national development planning". It was suggested by the recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, in which it was stated:

"10. An economic environment of growth with equitable distribution, both at the national level and in the international economic system, is essential, as is the recognition of women's full participation. The feminization of poverty reflects the underlying structural problems faced by women in the midst of economic change. Prevailing economic policies at the national and international levels have frequently failed to take into account potential negative effects on women or women's potential contribution and have accordingly not succeeded.

"*Recommendation VII. In order to help revitalize economic growth, international economic and social co-operation, together with sound economic policies, should be pursued. Structural adjustment and other economic reform measures should be designed and implemented so as to promote the full participation of women in the development process, while avoiding the negative economic and social effects. They should be accompanied by policies giving women equal access to credit, productive inputs, markets and decision-making and this should be incorporated fully into national economic policy and planning.*" (See Council resolution 1990/15, annex, sect. I.B.)

Seminar on women in extreme poverty

In preparation for the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women held a seminar at Vienna, from 9 to 12 November 1992, on the subject of the priority theme.

The ideas and actions that emerged from this seminar on women in extreme poverty represent a continuum, building on earlier meetings organized by the Division. Those meetings had already suggested that the issue of WID should have a new, more macro approach in its dimension.

The results of the seminar constituted the major input to the report of the Secretary-General for the consideration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session, which was very well received (see below for excerpts), and are also an important step in preparing the groundwork for discussion of the issue of development at the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace to be held in Beijing in 1995. This work must also be seen in the broader context of sustainable development and is highly relevant to the 1994 world survey on the role of women in development and the world summit for social development in 1995.

The seminar on women in extreme poverty had several objectives. The first was to examine the process by which poverty is generated and reproduced from a gender perspective. Particular emphasis was placed on the destabilizing effects of poverty, which brings with it changes in the reproductive and productive roles of men and women in the household. The focus was put on the intergenerational reproduction of poverty and its social costs. The second objective was to examine the role of different actors such as the State, the market and the community in a transformed development process for alleviating poverty. This examination should be based on a gender analysis, i.e. the systematic effort to document and understand the roles of men and women in key areas such as productive and reproductive activities, and access to and control over resources and benefits, including social, economic and environmental factors.

The overall objective was to make policy recommendations to the Commission on the Status of Women and other intergovernmental and governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations concerned with humanitarian assistance and development programmes. The issue of poverty needs to be given top priority by all, from community-based organizations, local, sub-national and national Governments, international agencies, intergovernmental bodies, non-governmental organizations, special interest groups to bilateral and multilateral agencies. In particular, specific consideration should be given to poor women whose voices have had the least impact on policy makers.

The seminar brought together experts from different regions of the world to discuss the differences in the patterns of poverty and to try to identify the general patterns that all regions

share. This analysis of commonality has served to reinforce the global nature of the problem and to highlight the ef ects that poverty has on the advancement of women. Without solving poverty, other problems relating to the equality of access for women to development will also not be solved.

A list of participants who presented papers is given below.

Bola Akanji, Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research, Ibadan, Nigeria: "A framework for the analysis female ultra-poverty and the integration of women in development: African perspective".

Patricia Alailima, Director, Human Resources Development Division, Ministry of Policy Planning and Implementation, Sri Lanka: "The integration of women in extreme poverty in development, the Sri Lanka experience".

Mayra Buvinic, International Centre for Research on Women, Washington, D.C., United States of America: "The costs and benefits of targeting poor woman-headed households and woman-maintained families in developing countries" (prepared with Geeta Rao Gupta).

María del Carmen Feijoo, Buenos Aires, Argentina: "Integration of women's concerns in national development planning: the Argentine experience".

Noleen Heyzer, Programme Coordinator, Women in Development, The Asian and Pacific Development Centre, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: "Gender, economic growth and poverty".

Devaki Jain, Institute of Social Studies Trust, Bangalore, India: "Women in extreme poverty (WEP) and the global political economy - the intersections".

Molly Pollack, Consultant, c/o Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, Chile: "Equitable integration of women in the labour market".

Júlia Szalai, Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary: "Some theoretical considerations on the prevailing concepts of poverty: the difficulties of international comparison".

Zenebeworke Tadesse, Deputy Executive Director, c/o Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, Dakar, Senegal: "Notes on the gender dimensions of poverty in Africa".

Taghrid Khuri Tubbeh, Amman, Jordan: "Women in extreme poverty".

The excerpts below are from the papers presented by the two consultants at the seminar, Diane Elson, Faculty of Economic and Social Studies, University of Manchester, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Naila Kabeer, Institute of Development Studies, University of Susex, United Kingdom.

"Public action, poverty and development: A gender aware analysis" by Diane Elson

"It is generally agreed that millions of people are living in poverty and that some kind of policy response is imperative. It is also agreed that women are disproportionately represented among the poor, a fact highlighted by two of the most influential and comprehensive recent publications on world poverty, the UNDP Human Development Report, 1990, and the World Bank World Development Report on Poverty, 1990.

" ... poverty has a decided gender bias. A large proportion of poor households are headed by women,

especially in rural Africa and the urban slums of Latin America. Female members of a poor household are often worse off than male members because of gender-based differences in the distribution of food and other entitlements within the family.' (UNDP, 1990, p. 22)

"'The weight of poverty falls most heavily on certain groups. Women in general are disadvantaged. In poor households they often shoulder more of the workload than men, are less educated, and have less access to remunerative activities.' (World Bank, 1990, p. 2).

"However, the strategies recommended for poverty alleviation are not based on analysis that systematically takes into account gender relations and the way they are biased against women. It is generally agreed that important contributions to reducing poverty can be made through the interacting operations of state agencies, markets, and community networks and organisations. But the potential for gender bias in these operations, and the need to remove

such bias if women's poverty is to be effectively alleviated is not systematically addressed." 8/

Elson's aim is to provide a gender-aware analysis of some frameworks for poverty alleviation, advocating an approach that draws on the concept of public action, as put forward by Dreze and Sen in their book on hunger (1989). 9/

" ... a key issue in effective responses to women's poverty is the ability of women's groups to intervene in the interacting operations of state agencies, markets and community networks and institutions, mobilising, pressurising, educating and organising to strengthen poor women's command over resources, beginning with command over their own persons and their own labour." 8/

In her paper, Elson goes on to consider three influential approaches to policies on poverty: by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), paying particular attention to their recommendations about the role of markets, States and communities.

"...Three features of this World Bank World Development Report seem particularly worthy of comment. Firstly, it assumes that markets left to themselves are capable of generating, in the long run, sufficient remunerative employment opportunities to lift all the able-bodied out of poverty. It is based on a high degree of market optimism. Secondly, it assumes that people and their labour can be treated as detachable from one another. Labour, 'the poor's most abundant asset' (p. 3), is regarded as a separable asset like physical capital (machines); capable of being bought and sold and accumulated in the same way as machines. This is most explicit in the use of the concept of 'human capital' to refer to strength and skills. Just like machines, labour is valued for the income it can yield; and its contribution to people's well-being is via the commodities that this income can buy (or be embodied in). The 'productive use of labour' is not evaluated in terms of the ways in which people are enabled to develop and use their capacities, but only in terms of the output that this produces and the satisfaction (utility) this output gives to those who consume it. Thus the relation between a person and the work they do is depersonalized, and the labour is not treated as a human activity but as an alienable asset. Thirdly, the community is treated in a completely depoliticised way and local participation is conceived very much in managerial terms. The political process and 'considerations of political economy' are treated quite separately, as something that happens at the national level. The political process is presented in terms of a 'real politik' in which people are motivated in terms of immediate material interest, so that policies to benefit the poor are only acceptable to the non-poor if the non-poor benefit too." 10/

According to Elson, the Human Development Report of UNDP differs from the World Bank Report, because, first, while stressing the importance of markets, there is less optimism about the implications of deregulated markets; it talks in terms of using rather than freeing markets. However the Report of UNDP is notably silent on the question of market organization. Secondly, human capabilities are not treated as instruments detachable from human beings and thirdly, the political dimension is treated in terms of the relationship between the people and the Government, and not the relationship between the poor and the non-poor. However,

"A surprising omission is recognition of the role in human development of women's unpaid work of care for children, the old and sick, and, what is often forgotten, able-bodied adult males too. ... with no mention that a major input is women's unpaid domestic labour." 11/

Neglect of this role of women means that the Report of UNDP does not get to the roots of gender inequality in the way in which women are socially assigned the indispensable nurturing role in human development, and yet are not assigned control over the resources necessary to discharge this role.

"The mixture of markets, planning, and community self-help groups advocated by the UNDP Report does not get to the roots of women's poverty, because, despite the protestations about its human-centred values, it has a gender-blind and technocratic analysis of the way in which human capacities are themselves produced. The idea of a national plan for human development as a focus for action has much to commend it. But any worthwhile national plan for human development must take into account the demands made on the time of women to nurture others, and the resources made available to women to do this. The pressures on the time of poor women who have children are extreme, and relieving that time pressure should be one of the key objectives of policy." 15/

Similarly, Elson maintains:

"Dreze and Sen miss the opportunity to situate the specificity of women's poverty as fundamentally a matter of gender bias in entitlements. ... It is not simply lack of employment opportunities that constrains women to endure intra-household inequality; in many cases it is also the threat or actuality of violence or losing their children. Women's poverty is deeper than that of men because women are not able to exercise rights of ownership and use of resources, including labour, to the same degree as men. (Kabeer, 1991) [12]." 13/

The paper concludes with a set of guidelines for public action to strengthen the entitlements of poor women. Elson contends that, although there is considerable concern to target resources on women, and many schemes have already been introduced to promote economic opportunities for them, which have benefited poor women, the approach has been piecemeal and does not go to the heart of the matter. One specific suggestion from Elson, in response to the World Bank's concept of human capital, is:

"The kind of market opportunities that poor women should have a right to are those that recognise them as human beings with rights and capabilities and responsibilities. Even in the absence of overt discrimination, market opportunities which tend to reduce women to units of 'human capital'; which fail to recognise their domestic responsibilities; which do nothing to offset the weak bargaining position of poor women in 'co-operative conflicts'; such opportunities are inadequate, even exploitative." 14/

"Women in poverty: a review of concepts and findings" by Naila Kabeer

Kabeer also refers to the recent constructive initiatives by UNDP and the World Bank etc. and reiterates the need for a gender dimension, but says that there is a need for a sea change in policy formulation. The following excerpt is from her conclusion: policy strategies for women in poverty:

"Despite the complexities of collecting and interpreting data on women's poverty in the different contexts, the analysis of its causes is relatively simple. Women are poor because they are disadvantaged, in relation to their male family members, in the satisfaction of their basic needs and in their access to independent means for satisfying these needs. Strategies for addressing it are correspondingly relatively straightforward to formulate, but may be more politically difficult to implement if seen as explicitly favouring women. Here the possibility of using women's practical needs as a means of advancing their longer term strategic interests appears a more politically feasible solution. The twin-track strategy for poverty alleviation put forward by the World Bank in its 1990 report, basically consisting of labour intensive growth plus social services, contains certain promising implications for poor women provided it is given a gender-sensitive interpretation.

"First of all, it appears that time and energy constraints are particularly binding for poorer women because of their double involvement in making a living and building a family. At the same time, labour power is the single most important resource at the disposal of poor women - and men. Given both the long hours of work that poor women are already engaged in, and their greater tendency to engage in income-earning activities, they will benefit from labour-intensive growth provided efforts are made to address their disadvantages in the labour [market]. We have seen from India, a region with fairly rigid prescriptions about the gender division of labour, the extent to which poverty, on the one hand, and increased demand for labour on the other has helped to weaken and even erode gender-based restrictions among the landless, at least as far as making a living is concerned. The point is that poor women are most likely to respond to labour opportunities but if their prior domestic responsibilities are not addressed, this may be achieved only through further intensification of their workloads.

"The problem with past efforts to assist women in their familial roles was its 'welfarism', the provision of welfare goods such as health services, education and family planning to women as passive dependants of the state. It is necessary to move away from this confusion between welfare and welfarism. Given the emphasis in the new poverty agenda on the importance of the human capabilities of the poor, investments in social services need to be reenvisaged as critical investments in the human resource capacity of the nation and in the loosening of women's time constraint.

"However, provision of services does not guarantee their take-up. More carefully planned provision of social services targeted to poorer areas and classes are a first step in ensuring that women benefit from these services. A second step is to ensure that they are consulted in the planning of these services. Participation at all levels by potential users of scarce resources is likely to make the most cost-effective use of scarce resources by guarding against the provision of inappropriately designed services, embodying misplaced assumptions about women's needs.

"Similarly, making labour markets more accessible to women rather than creating women-only income generating projects would also not only have greater transformation potential for women's position within the family, but would again bypass the need for singling women out for women-specific interventions which have had a poor record in the past. It is in the longer-term interests of all women, but poor women in particular, that their needs and capabilities are incorporated into strategies for labour-intensive growth from their inception, rather than being incorporated as a footnote when it becomes clear that they are not benefiting from the new forms of growth. Key policy interventions here are the public provision of child care facilities or the provision of resources to women's community organisations to assist them in designing ways of meeting their child care needs.

"All of this requires a sea change in the formulation, design, planning and implementation of the new poverty agenda. Policymakers, including the authors of the World Bank new strategy, may have recognised that the 'efficiency' approach ... requires recognition of women's productive capacity. However poor women either continue to be subsumed within the categories of 'the poor' when broader policy issues are being discussed or else brought in as a special category requiring special interventions once the broader policy issues have been decided. Women in poverty have shown considerable resourcefulness and initiative in compensating for their exclusion from the resources of the market and the state. They have formed their own labour and credit associations, created community-based kitchens to release them from their domestic responsibilities, lobbied for social

infrastructure from their local authorities and resisted official attempts to encroach on their customary entitlements through ill informed projects and inequitable laws. Despite all their disadvantages, they contribute the major proportion of the income of poorer households and they ensure the wellbeing of their children in much of the world. The new poverty agenda needs to begin from a recognition of women's achievements, not their neediness, and it should aim at enhancing women's capabilities, not their dependence."

Excerpts from the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session*

The meaning and measurement of poverty

"It is important to clarify some of the different meanings given to the concept of poverty. A useful starting point for thinking about poverty is the concept of deprivation: the poor are those who are deprived of basic human needs. Like other important concepts of development, the notion of poverty contains a distinction

between means and ends. It cannot be identified exclusively either with deprivation itself or with the lack of means to escape deprivation.

"The conventional economic approach has been to focus on the 'means' aspect of poverty. It has been entirely concerned with the sufficiency of household income in achieving a satisfactory level of welfare; how households choose to use their incomes is seen as a matter of individual choice rather than an issue of poverty. In order to define a 'satisfactory' level of welfare, it is necessary to make certain judgments relating to the constituents of both absolute and relative levels of poverty. Absolute levels refer to the deprivation of certain basic needs, which have to be met regardless of the social context. All needs related to human survival - food, water, shelter, fuel - may be seen as making up this minimum bundle of needs. A poverty line based on the level of income necessary to purchase this bundle of goods is an example of an absolute measure of poverty. Relative pov-

erty, on the other hand, is defined by the general standard of living in a given context. It relates to the level of needs considered to constitute an acceptable standard of living in a particular society and is therefore likely to rise with an overall rise in the standard of living. ..."

Gender and entitlement systems

"[Entitlements] are concerned with command over labour, opportunities for the productive use of labour, returns on labour and control over these returns. As a general rule, women are less able than men to command the labour power necessary to activate or sustain independent forms of production. They have fewer options in the labour market because their prior responsibilities within the home make them less mobile and investments in the labour market tend to be lower. Returns on their labour are also lower - partly because of direct discrimination, partly because they have fewer marketable skills and partly because of imperfections in market forces, which confine them to less well paid and more casual segments of the

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labour market. Finally, women are more likely to be found in forms of labour processes where either their contribution is subsumed within an overall process that is controlled by men or else marketing of their produce and hence control over it passes to men. ... ."

"Thus, labour-based entitlement systems are unfair to women in a number of different ways. For example, women are at a disadvantage as a result of non-reciprocal labour arrangements with male household m e m b e r s, subsumption in male-controlled production processes, norms that restrict their access to paid labour, and a smaller cash income and hence the inability to hire labour.

" N e g a t i v e synergy associated with female poverty lies in the combination of their dual responsibilities in family formation and family livelihood strategies. Having to earn a living and care for other family members simultaneously explains why time-allocation studies from much of the world show that women generally

work longer hours than men when their unpaid domestic labour is taken into account.

"The official statistics on female participation in the labour force, however, only capture some dimensions of women's work and not the full range of tasks that they perform. The statistics usually indicate how much of this work is in economic activity as conventionally defined. ..."

"Throughout the world, gender differentials in returns on labour are considerable. Women's disadvantages within the labour market - poorer health and education, childbearing and child-rearing responsibilities, and a lower capacity to raise their wages through enhanced human capital - make it more difficult for them to move from one job or area to another.

"Along with women's disadvantaged entitlements within the household and labour markets, there is some evidence to suggest they have also been discriminated against in their entitlements to officially dis-

tributed resources. The assumption of male headship of unified household units has led to the distribution of irrigated land, agricultural extension advice and credit to male heads, with a disregard for the interests of women within households or of households headed by females."

Conclusions and recommendations

"The issue of poverty continues to be a major challenge for the international community, Governments and the people themselves. Its eradication is one of the three themes for the World Summit on Social Development to be held in 1995, a major objective of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 45/99, annex) and a significant component of Agenda 21,* adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

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*The text of Agenda 21 is set out in volumes I-III of the report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992 (A/CONF.151/26). The final version of the report will be issued as a United Nations sales publication.

"There is a growing awareness that poverty in general, and extreme poverty in particular, has a significant gender dimension. This gender dimension helps to explain why and how women and men experience poverty differently and unequally and become impoverished through processes that may differ. If differences between women and men are not taken into account, the causes of poverty cannot be adequately understood or dealt with by public action.

"Women are in a more disadvantaged position because of their dual need to make a living and to provide care for family members, tasks that are not equitably shared. Demands on time and energy are particularly constrictive for women living in poverty, as their labour is the single most important resource at their disposal. The neglect of human reproductive activities by society and especially the lack of a legitimate articulation between production and reproduction constitute the core of gender inequality, which affect women in general and women in poverty specifically. These circumstances are aggravated when, because of external economic factors or the absence of a spouse, the woman becomes the sole income-earner in the household. In addition, the availability of means at the household level to satisfy the needs of all its members is often based on entitlements that are not equitably available to men and women.

"Both women and men are subject to macro-economic factors relating to income earning and distribution. The gender dimension, at a micro-economic level, affects women and men differently. It also contributes to an intergenerational transmission of poverty.

"In the past, assistance to poor women vis-à-vis their family roles was primarily in the form of public goods such as health services, education and family planning. These services were often accompanied, however, by the attitude that women were passive dependants of the State, and they often embodied misplaced assumptions about women's real needs. In contrast, social services should be seen as investments in women's capacity to be a productive and equitably remunerated part of the economy and, to come to the core of the issue, they should be aimed at easing the constraints on women's time and the demands on their energy.

"To change the concept of public programmes implies examining the capacity of the State to deal with poverty and its central role, together with the market and the community, in bringing about economic and social change. It also implies a clear understanding of the relationship between the individual and the household when dealing with poverty. Programmes need to take into account the different needs and entitlements of different members of the household and the distribution of resources between them.

"Governments and the international community should promote change in the formulation, design, planning and implementation of a new poverty agenda, which should include the recognition of women as principal economic actors and enable them to realize their untapped potential. In order to meet the goals of equity and efficiency underlying current development thinking, significant changes are required in the way in which they are approached. These changes should represent a major challenge to society.

"Governments should promote social innovation that seeks to establish new institutions and new rules of behaviour, _inter alia_, by bringing hitherto accepted social norms and standards into line with reality. Policies that support a traditional division of labour based on gender should be questioned in view of their effects on fertility rates, female participation in the labour force and equality of men and women in the labour market.

"Policies and programmes should be adopted to empower women to become active agents in shaping the ongoing process, including a redefinition of the interrelationships between the social, economic and political factors that currently inhibit women's participation and life choices. A new perspective should be applied to the causes of inequality and men should be encouraged to examine the meaning of equality for their own life patterns and identity, including such factors as the emotional rewards to be derived from caring for their children. Society as a whole will benefit from an integrated policy strategy of this kind.

"Opportunities to enhance both economic efficiency and gender equity should take into account the multiple influences of the structural forces at play and the specific circumstances in each country. There is significant diversity amongst countries, in terms of both the economic integration of women (status of women) and industrial, labour market, social, political and cultural structures.

"The recommendations made at the seminar should be carefully studied and widely disseminated. They should be taken into account in the discussions on the preparation of the World Summit on Social Development, as well as in the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. They should also be taken into account by organizations of the United Nations system when they are designing and implementing operational programmes for the eradication of poverty."

**Statement by Gertrude Mongella,
Secretary-General of the
Fourth World Conference on Women:
Action for Equality, Development
and Peace, to the
Commission on the Status of Women
at its thirty-seventh session**

"The Beijing Conference will be another milestone for women. The Conference will take place 50 years after the United Nations set its global objectives, one of which was to obtain the equal rights of men and women. It will also be an opportunity to see how far we have travelled toward achieving the objectives for the advancement of women 20 years after the Mexico City conference which launched the United Nations Decade for Women, and defined a first World Plan for Action to promote the equality of women and their contribution to development and peace. It will also be an opportunity to see how far, from a gender perspective, the United Nations has gone towards achieving the global goals of equality, development and peace.

"The reference point for the Conference in 1995 will be the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, which remain to date the most detailed expression of the international community's position on the advancement of women, intended to be implemented by the year 2000 ... it is also necessary to underscore the unprecedented changes that have occurred since 1985 and to recognize how they affect the situation of women and how they at the same time create opportunities for women's advancement ...

"In our preparatory work for the Beijing Conference, we must acknowledge the conceptual shift that has occurred over the past decade: the emphasis is no longer on women's issues, but rather on applying a gender perspective to global issues. Our focus should be to see how women are affected by global problems and how they themselves can bring about solutions to these problems. We can be proud that women have already mobilized around many of these issues and we can draw strength from what has been achieved and value the lessons learned. But if we are to move into the twenty-first century with confidence, we will have to maintain the momentum and continue our efforts at each of the other conferences which will take place between now and 1985.

"In the follow-up to the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it will mean ensuring that the gender dimensions that are found throughout Agenda 21 are kept in mind and the relevant provisions implemented.

"The International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 must clearly set out gender dimensions of population growth and movement.

"The World Summit on Social Development in 1995 must clearly define the policies that States, the market and the community should follow to alleviate poverty, achieve social integration and productive employment for women ...

"[The Fourth World Conference] should create the impetus in society for women to move forward, well equipped to meet the challenges and demands of the twenty-first century for scientific, technological, economic and political development ... .

"We must recall that there are only seven years remaining before the year 2000 and two of those will elapse as we prepare for Beijing."

Linking with other agendas and agencies: the mainstreamin of gender

Ms. Mongella talks of the conceptual shift of the last decade and the global nature of the problems. There is increasing evidence, judging by the agendas for the major United Nations conferences, of a concerted approach that integrates gender bias as it affects women and men, and of the acceptance of a new challenge. The section below focuses on some recent publications and statements that illustrate the conceptual shift in this collaborative approach.

The issue of women and poverty cannot be considered in isolation since it impinges on many other priorities, as illustrated by the provisional agenda for the thirty-eighth session of the Commission of the Status of Women. The rather complex title of the second priority theme under the same heading of "Development" highlights the inter-relating socio-economic factors that affect women in urban areas and the need to share the expertise from various United Nations bodies: "Women in urban areas: population, nutrition and health factors for women in development, including migration, drug consumption and AIDS". The theme will have to synthesize the research findings and the experience from a variety of sectors and will further consolidate the

need to take a broader and more realistic view of the impediments to the advancement of women and the causes of poverty.

"... the essence of population increase will take place in urban areas over the next decades. The urban population in developing countries is expected to more than double between 1990 and 2020, representing an increase estimated at over 2 billion people. The magnitude of the phenomenon is illustrated by the fact that the total urban population in developing countries in 2020 will be as large as was the total world population, i.e. rural and urban, in developed and developing countries in 1965." (E/CN.6/1993/CRP.1)

This population aspect of WID has also been elaborated in a discussion note entitled "Gender perspective in family planning programmes", which was prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women for the Expert Group Meeting on Family Planning, Health and Family Well-being, held at Bangalore, India, 26-30 October 1992, and organized by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development in consultation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In the note, it is said:

"Economic development in tandem with distribution of resources and the political will to raise the status of women, are important factors for reducing fertility in the long run. Although *this has been recognized in theory, it has only been translated into practice to a limited extent in family planning service delivery. Far too often programmes still operate in a 'gender-vacuum'; to a great extent ignoring the underlying factors which cause women to voluntarily or involuntarily give birth to many children, thus attempting to cure rather than prevent.*

"... Due to their lower status, women often end up being more or less economically dependent on men all through their lives, whether on male relatives, husbands or partners. This leaves women with reduced bargaining power and little influence on decision-making. ...

"In order to be effective in the long run, family planning programmes should not only focus on attempting to reduce fertility within existing gender roles, but rather on changing gender roles in order to reduce fertility....

"A gender-sensitive approach to family planning could lead to considering integrating several new variables in these programmes. Limiting *family planning programmes to the aspects of fertility is not enough, instead links between the status of women and, for example, education, salaried employment and migration will have to be identified and dealt with. By applying a gender perspective to each of the traditional variables, i.e. fertility, migration and mortality, one could gain new insights and find ways to improve policies and programmes."*

UNFPA is another United Nations organization that is developing a new awareness of the need for a gender dimension. The interconnections between poverty, over-population and the inequality of women's status are considered in an article that appeared in the magazine of UNFPA. The article emphasizes the need to take into account different socio-economic and development perspectives and to include an analysis of gender discrimination in order to tackle the population problem.

"The short-sighted separation of demographic goals from other development efforts is a serious setback for the human rights of hundreds of millions of women who lack access to adequate nutrition, education, legal rights, income earning opportunities, and the

promise of increasing personal autonomy. The objective of reducing population growth is critical to reversing the deterioration of both human and environmental health. But development strategies that fail to address the root cause of the population problem will render this objective unreachable.

"From food production to control over income, indications are that the position of women within subsistence economies is growing increasingly insecure. Women have fewer and fewer resources within their control, and are having to make the trade-offs necessary to survive under increasingly demanding circumstances. To save time and energy, for example, they are forced to switch to less labour- or fuel-intensive crops or foods, although this often means less nutrition.

"The growing time constraints imposed on women by the longer hours they must work to make ends meet lowers their status and keeps birth rates high. When they can no longer add to their own labour burdens, women lean more heavily on the contri-

butions of their children - especially girls. In fact, the increasing tendency to keep girls out of school to help with their mothers' work virtually ensures that another generation of females will grow up with lesser prospects than their brothers.

"... There are 5.5 billion people in the world today. Current estimates put the total at 10 billion by 2050, a near doubling in just over 50 years. Ninety-seven per cent of this population growth will take place in the poorest countries.

"... There is no doubt that more and better family planning programmes delivered in conjunction with broader reproductive health services, will vastly improve the health of women worldwide. They also may contribute to a more rapid reduction in birth rates by enabling women to exercise their human right to plan their families. But without dramatic changes in the theory and practice of 'development', these programmes cannot, and will not, reduce poverty or remedy the growing conflicts be-

tween human populations and the environment.

"One reason is that many of the problems attributed to population growth - such as deforestation and desertification - are less connected to population per se growth than to the government policies designed to protect vested interests, including those of the state itself. Another is that these same policies are heavily reliant on the 'shadow subsidies' of undervalued female labour and discounted natural resources to promote unsustainable economic growth, and further reinforce women's need for children.

"... The strategies needed to make women equal partners in society are complex and require a kind of sustained political commitment not abundantly present in many governments. The rapid pace of population growth, in contrast, ignites support for short-cuts such as family planning programmes based on narrow demographic objectives. Developing

world women, over-whelmingly poor and lacking political clout, too often become the first targets of population 'control'.

"... The inability of women to obtain land and other productive resources means they must marry and produce sons; their growing time constraints and family responsibilities reinforce their reliance on daughters.

"... No population policy alone can make up for the decades of economic and development strategies that ignored the needs of the poor, the limits of the environment and the over-consumption of the few. In assigning rights and duties, the emphasis is too often placed on the obligations of couples to have smaller families, and too rarely on the duties of governments to ensure that their people have the resources required to meet basic needs -despite the fact that poverty among women is the major cause of rapid population growth." 15/

The restrictions that poverty is imposing on progress towards equal rights for women was also recognized in discussion concerning another of the priority themes to be considered at the thirty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women; namely, equal pay for work of equal value, including methodologies for measurement of pay inequities and work in the informal sector under the heading of "Equality".

"Comparable worth also promises a potentially fundamental transformation of women's lives by enhancing their capacity to support themselves and their dependents in a time of deepening female poverty." The importance of women's economic autonomy is not only because of the threat of poverty but also because it would allow women to make life choices more freely (e.g. education, work and marriage). Implicit is the recognition that independent support is the foundation for full citizenship and participation in the broader community.

"Although there has been some progress, social and economic changes such as world economic recession, the move to informal sectors and to part-time employment has renewed the problems." (E/CN.6/1993/CRP.1)

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and UNIFEM

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro in June 1992, also highlighted many of these interrelating issues, which will be followed up in the preparations for the forthcoming Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit on Social Development to be held in 1995.

As a result of the Rio Conference, the concept of sustainable development is now well-established; however, the Conference also provided an opportunity for the mainstreaming of women's concerns as an integral part of development if it is to be truly sustainable. In order to illustrate the connections with women's development, UNIFEM has co-sponsored a publication, the purpose of which is to serve as an easy reference to the recommendations in Agenda 21 that specifically mention women and their role in achieving sustainable development. For example:

"3.5 ... In general, design programmes should:

"(c) Contain a long-term strategy aimed at establishing the best possible conditions for sustainable local, regional and national development that would eliminate poverty and reduce the

inequalities between various population groups. It should assist the most disadvantaged groups - in particular women, children and youth within those groups - and refugees. The groups will include poor small-holders, pastoralists, artisans, fishing communities, landless people, indigenous communities and the urban informal sector.

"3.7 ... Governments, in cooperation with appropriate international and non-governmental organizations, should support a community-driven approach to sustainability, which would include, inter alia: (a) Empowering women through full participation in decision-making."

The publication goes on to highlight all the measures that need to be taken to encourage sustainable development while ensuring the advancement of women. The emphasis is on the need for an awareness of gender bias. The Conference emphasized that gender considerations should be integrated into all policies, programmes and activities.

UNDP

UNDP is also demonstrating a clear commitment to a gender approach to WID. It is collaborating with UNIFEM on developing a Regional Gender Strategy within its regional programme for Africa that will include "genderizing" some of Africa's regional training institutions.

"UNDP is focusing on developing and strengthening human and institutional capacities that enhance mainstreaming of women and women's issues. Areas of capacity building so far identified include: gender planning; disaggregation of statistics by gender; gender training as both a mainstreaming tool and as an empowering tool; participation; group formation and networking. In this aspect of our work we are particularly focusing on identification of new techniques and methodologies for women's development." 16/

The disaggregated statistics in the Human Development Report, 1993, 2/ provide interesting data on gender disparities. For example, Japan is top of the Human Development Index (HDI) overall, but when the HDI is adjusted to reflect the status of women, Japan falls to place 17; furthermore, Japanese women earn only 51 per cent of what Japanese men earn. The focus of the Report is on people's participation and it clearly points to the need for women's participation to be recognized and assured. Thirty-seven per cent of UNDP grants will go to poverty alleviation and people's participation programmes.

WHO

In response to the growing disparities between rich and poor and the trend towards the feminization of poverty, the World Health Organization has recognized the need to consider the broader aspects relating to health and specifically that of women. In a progress report by the Director-General on the women, health and development programme, 17/ women, as the primary providers of health care, are viewed in the wider context of their integration into development.

"The title of the programme denotes the complex interrelationships between the health of women and their social, political, cultural and economic situations as well as their contribution to health and overall development.

"Along with the sense of urgency brought about as a result of economic crises, population growth and environmental degradation, there has been the growing recognition that these and the other basic problems of development have a far better chance of being solved with greater involvement of women as active participants and agents of change. In the family, the health-enhancing activities of women relate to their many roles. Women are the health educators; women are the primary processors, storers and preparers of food and are responsible for nutrition."

Time for action

In April 1972, at its eighth session held over 20 years ago, the Committee for Development Planning focused attention on the problems of mass poverty and unemployment in developing countries. Its views were published in a document issued by the Centre for Economic and Social Information in which it is stated: the "problems of mass poverty are massive, growing and urgent. These problems require urgent attack". 18/ A similarly forceful line was taken in the statement the Director of UNIFEM made to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session: "as the world once again becomes distracted by the bombs that are exploding, scant attention is being paid to the bomb that is ticking away. The poverty bomb".

Already in 1972, the special needs of poor women had been clearly noted:

"It is generally overlooked that a large proportion of the persons occupied in low productivity service occupations are women, and many of them are widows and deserted women with children. Nearly all such women are illiterate and without vocational training. As industries in most developing countries recruit mainly male workers, these women are forced to support themselves and their families on work of such low productivity that malnutrition and high child mortality become a characteristic of such families. The solution to this type of acute poverty must be found in helping women to obtain higher incomes by opening the doors to industrial and other wage-earning jobs and by training them for more skilled work." 19/

and yet, these suggestions are still being heard today:

"Mass poverty continues to be a dominating feature in the developing countries, and unemployment has assumed serious proportions in many of them. ... Even if people have some semblance of work, their productivity remains low. The continued rural-to-urban migration of people in search of better work and incomes has further aggravated the problem by spreading slums and shanty towns and exacerbating the misery of poverty.

"... extreme and persisting cases of under-used human resources and glaring income inequalities are typically rooted in institutional rigidities ... it follows that programmes aimed at reducing mass poverty and unemployment should be conceived as essential components of the over-all process of economic and social planning. In some cases, this may call for substantial modification to present approaches to planning; in others, radically new approaches may be required ... It is difficult to suggest a general method of settling these differences, since the answer will depend largely on the political pattern and the prevailing social environment in individual countries ... Governments determined to combat poverty should find means of representing the interests of all major sections of their societies, particularly the economically most disadvantaged and politically weakest segments. ..." (Sharon Capeling-Alakija, Director, UNIFEM)

Despite the continuing evidence of increasing global poverty, there are many encouraging examples of a changing picture. The gender approach is gaining acceptance and the whole United Nations system, together with many other affiliated organizations, is realizing its importance in achieving the goals for successful development, and in finally eradicating poverty.

Nevertheless, there is a long way to go and there are ever increasing numbers of refugees and people displaced from their homes, because of famine or civil unrest in their nations. The

clearly devastating effects of the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic will only add to the number of people, and especially women and children, who are left without a livelihood and forced to migrate towards the urban conurbations in search of work.

It is important to heed the warnings of the past and the present and to ensure that the new policies do not remain only policies but are translated into action plans that involve the participation of women and men at all levels. If the United Nations reports and policies are not heeded and implemented at the national level and with urgency, the repercussions of poverty will threaten the stability of a large part of the world.

Tribute to
Ms. Chafika Meslem

On 1 June 1993 the Division for the Advancement of Women said goodbye to Ms. Chafika Meslem, Director of the Division since 1981. Ms. Meslem left to take up her new post as Director of the Division for Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries in the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva. Ms. Meslem had led the United Nations programme for the advancement of women for twelve years, including during the Nairobi Conference, of which she was Deputy Secretary-General . During her period of leadership, the Division began its work to implement the Nairobi Strategies. Ms. Meslem has been a tireless defender of women's rights and has left her mark on the work of the organization.

Women
on the move

The Marrakesh Declaration from the Mediterranean and European Women's Summit

Summary

❖ The Marrakesh Declaration from the Mediterranean and European Women's Summit

❖ Women want commitment, not lip-service

❖ All women were born girls / Facts

❖ Paper cuts from China Organizing Committee

❖ Briefs / Disabled women preparing for Beijing

❖ Youth Corner / Lack of information on women in small islands

❖ UN publications plan for World's Women Trends and Statistics

❖ Calendar

A Summit of Mediterranean and European Women: Women for Peace, took place in Marrakesh, Morocco, under the the auspices of the European Commission, at the invitation of the Moroccan Government, from 27 to 29 May 1994.

The China Organizing Committee has produced a series of paper cuts inspired by the theme of the Beijing Conference: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.

More than 250 female MPs, influential personalities of civil society, and women leaders, businesswomen, journalists and students from Europe, North Africa and the Middle East met in the Kingdom of Morocco to affirm the role of women in the construction of peace in the Mediterranean.

The event was inaugurated by HRH Princess Lalla Meryem, who made an allocution, at the opening session, on behalf of King Hassan II of Morocco.

The Marrakesh Women's Summit, encouraged by the hope emanating from the peace process initiated between the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, which it hopes to see extended to the entire region, stressed that "dialogue, confidence-building and the fostering of mutual understanding are the solution to conflicts and their prevention".

The participants considered that the stability of the Mediterranean region is a "key factor" in the achievement of global peace and that it must be an objective for each of the peoples of bordering States.

They also declared their solidarity with all the victims—especially women—of racism and all forms of extremism and violence.

The Marrakesh Declaration, adopted on 29 May, also demands that the United Nations take "urgent and necessary measures to assure the implementation of and compliance with those resolutions devoted to the equal right of all the peoples of the region to peace, prosperity and development".

It also requires from the international community a guarantee that, in case of an embargo, the life and health of the civilian population in general, and of women and children in particular, be preserved.

The participants decided finally to develop the relationship between women of the Mediterranean and of Europe to increase their access to positions of responsibility at all levels and to create networks (WAM, Women's Action Mediterranean) in order to achieve peace in the Mediterranean and to emphasize common values while respecting differences.

Contact: 63, avenue d'Auderghem, 1040 Bruxelles, Belgium.
Tel. 32-2-230.62.32 or 230.38.46
Fax 32-2-230.33.58

Women want commitment, not lip-service

It is time for women to stop knocking on the door as if they were merely invitees on this planet, said the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Gertrude Mongella.

During the first meeting of the Advisory Group, on 5 May in Geneva, she insisted on the practical steps which can be taken to remove those obstacles which still impede the full participation of women in society.

"The reality is that women still, in many instances, remain without an equitable share of the economic, political and social resources that should be theirs by right. It is time to stop knocking on the door and begging favours as if we were merely invitees on this planet", she urged.

Underdevelopment and economic disintegration, said Mongella, have resulted in structural adjustment programmes which have meant that more money is used to pay debt than is invested in a country.

One direct effect on women is the increase in the prices of basic products, resulting in an increase in malnutrition in some countries. Other global consequences are cut-backs in access to education, health and availability of natural resources so vital to women's lives.

Other examples of the gap between the role women are effectively playing on the planet and the reduced power they have in terms of decision-making were given by the eminent persons composing the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group for the next Women's Conference.

One example is the case of poor women in rural areas, who are particularly dependent upon produc-

EQUALITY DEVELOPMENT PEACE

tivity of the land and are, at the same time, the major fuel and energy users.

Deforestation has forced women to spend more time travelling to collect scarce fuel, as well as water supplies.

In some regions, rapid economic growth was made possible during recent decades through the exploitation of a cheap and plentiful labour source, predominantly women and children. In other regions, such as Eastern Europe, women are currently bearing a disproportionate burden of unemployment.

The 1993 United Nations *World Economic Survey* pointed

out that most Eastern European economies will suffer a further sharp fall in output, with zero growth overall again expected in 1994.

According to the *World Economic Survey* forecasts, there

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will be no relief for incomes, which have plunged sharply since 1989.

Therefore, social stress will remain acute and represents a potent treat to the process of economic transition, added the *Survey*, which also stressed that policies involving only the distribution of food and not including health care, sanitation, education and other components of a broader approach are not likely to have a lasting impact on hunger, which is intimately related to poverty.

During their discussions, the members of the Advisory Group recommended addressing the question of poverty, and underlined that women, particularly rural women, continue to be most affected by it.

They also said that the United Nations should be a model in recognizing the contribution and worth of women, including their role in peace-making and conflict resolution. They added that investment in women yields high returns.

The UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, stressed, in his opening remarks, that a turning point has been reached in the cause of women worldwide. "Recognition of women's centrality to all dimensions of development grows, but resources decline and priorities become more difficult to determine".

Mongella appealed for "explicit" and "informed initiatives" to advance women's interest for the benefit of everyone in the society. She concluded that what is now required more than ever before is COMMITMENT, "not mere lip-service without follow-up".

She forcefully called upon the members of the Advisory Group to ensure that the Fourth World Conference on Women is a milestone in achieving a more equitable world in the twenty-first century.

"If this is to be achieved it is imperative that Governments commit to very practical actions that can ensure women their rightful place in society", she said.

The China Organizing Committee has produced a series of paper cuts inspired by the theme of

the Beijing Conference: Action for Equality, Development and Peace. In this issue are some offered to the readers of *Women on the Move*.

Did you know

?

Equal opportunity! Equal Access!

Five women were named by President Nelson Mandela to the new South African Cabinet after last April's first multiracial elections: Minister of Health; Minister of Public Enterprises; Deputy Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology; Deputy Minister for Welfare; and Deputy Minister for Agriculture.

All women of this world were born girls!

Inequality, ignorance and poverty form the equation that hinders the harmonious development of many girls. If we resolve this equation, then it will be much easier to find solutions to the discrimination that women are facing.

Why? Simply because all women in this world were born girls, said Gertrude Mongella, the Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

In a statement to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board in New York on 3 May, she stressed that inequalities in education, nutrition, health, status and personal safety begin at this stage.

"Discrimination does not start at age 18, when most societies grant majority to the girl and consider her an adult woman", she emphasized.

UNICEF recently issued a publication titled *Girls and Women: a UNICEF development priority*, under the direction of Misrak Elias and Sreelakshmi Gururaja, of the Women's Development Policy Unit, UNICEF Programme Division.

Through four chapters on "Health and the status of women", "Food, income and household maintenance", "Education for girls and women" and "UNICEF and the future of girls and women", the 32-page publication opens with these considerations, made by James Grant, the Executive Director of UNICEF:

"In the developing world today, many more boys become literate than girls. In some countries, twice as many boys as girls are brought to health centres for treatment. Employment rights, social security rights, legal rights, property rights, and even civil and political liberties are all likely to depend on the one, cruel chromosome distinguishing human male from human female."

Facts:

—The 1990s have been proclaimed by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as a decade for the girl child.

—The estimated loss in female lives represented by physical neglect of girl children is between 60 and 100 million worldwide.

—Before 19 years of age, 60 to 70 per cent of girls in many African and Asian countries are married.

—In 1990, 130 million children had no access to primary school; 81 million of them were girls.
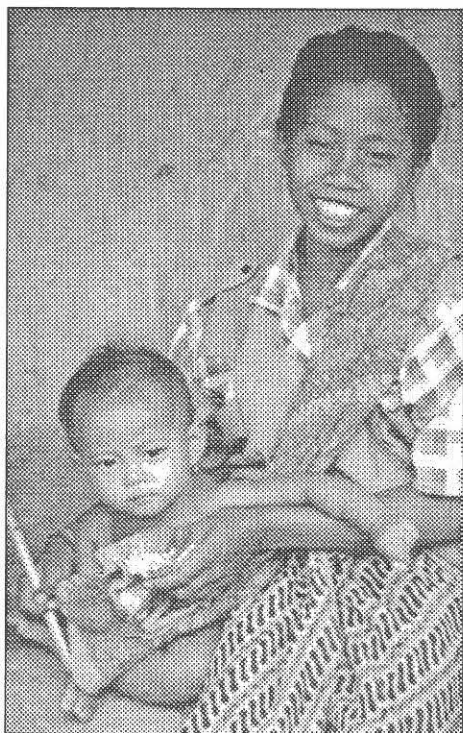
Sasak children, Lombok. Photo: D.B. Hayes ©

Disabled women preparing for Beijing

Briefs

** "Europe for women–Women for Europe" is the title of the Greek Presidential Conference on equal opportunities between men and women, which was organized in Thessaliniki, Greece, from 16 to 18 May.

Some of the themes discussed were the role of the European Parliament for the promotion of women in decision-making centres, the presence of women in economy and employment in the European Union, problems and perspectives, women and structural changes, women and mass media.

** An International Conference of Jewish Women Leaders in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women will be held in Jerusalem from 9 to 12 November 1994, under the auspices of the Council of Women's Organizations in Israel (CWOI).

Contact: Mina Westman, Emunah, 26 Ben Maimon Ave. P.O. Box 7788, Jerusalem 92261, Israel.
Tel. 02-631.303
Fax. 02-662.811

Nearly half of the 500 million disabled people in the world today are women. Stereotypes and even negative attitudes towards disability are still common. Consequently, women with disabilities face the discrimination that comes both with being a woman and with being disabled.

This assertion was made by María Cristina Sará-Serrano, of the organization Disabled Peoples' International at the March 1994 session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York.

Access to education and training for girls and women with disabilities is crucial, said Sará-Serrano, while listing the actions that should be taken into consideration in the Platform for Action to be adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, in September 1995 in Beijing, China.

"The reality is that women and girls with disabilities are considered less valuable than other women, and more costly to educate, and are therefore given fewer opportunities for education and training", commented Sará-Serrano.

She stressed that the same situation occurs with regard with health care, especially in terms of primary health care in developing countries. The representative of Disabled Peoples' International asked for special efforts to cover these health needs both at home and in clinics and hospitals.

Sará-Serrano said that these two basic actions provide "the basis for women with disabilities to play a full and equal role in the economy, in the family, in politics and in the community, and guarantee their self-determination on the same basis as other women".

She finally demanded that the Fourth World Conference on Women provide "the necessary facilities for full participation by women with disabilities".

Lack of information on women in small islands!

Dame Nita Barrow, who played an important role at the previous women's conference in Nairobi as Convenor of the NGO Forum, recently welcomed, this time as Governor-General of Barbados, the participants to the first ever Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

Almost 50 islands and territories, mostly from the Pacific and Indian oceans and the Caribbean, took part in this event, convoked by the United Nations in Bridgetown, Barbados, from 25 April to 6 May 1994.

Dame Nita Barrow led an eminent persons group (EPG) which met prior to the Conference; it was very critical of the industrialized countries for their lack of political will and urged them to begin a process of partnership with the small islands.

Vulnerability, fragility and remoteness are the common problems faced by these islands, mostly lying in the tropical regions and living from tourism and monoculture in crops such as copra, sugar and bananas.

Presided over by Barbados Prime Minister Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, the Conference elected a woman, Penelope Wensley, from Australia, as chairperson of the Main Commission of the Conference.

Within the United Nations system, there is consensus that in order to achieve sustainable development, effective mobilization and integration of women are essential. This can be achieved through "gender analysis", which aims to examine how gender relations, defined as the relative positions in society of women and men, affect their ability to participate in development.

However, the documentation available during the Global Conference on Small Islands did not show this approach. The women's groups attending in Bridgetown were surprised not to find specific literature related to women and development in the islands.

Does that reveal the non-existence of such studies and data? If so, efforts should be made, as follow-up to the Conference, to remedy the situation by encouraging and financing data collection and research on women in every small island.

The World's Women
Trends and Statistics
1970-1990

The unique new publication from the United Nations on women (and men) provides numbers and analysis to inform people everywhere about how much women contribute to economic life, political life and family life, and provides the ammunition to persuade public and private decisionmakers to change policies that are unfair to women.

One of the most obvious differences between men's and women's worlds is women's child-bearing role and their near-total responsibility for family care and household management. Even where women have control over their reproductive lives, they are far too often the providers of last resort for their families and themselves, in relentlessly adverse conditions.

Consider this: the number of illiterate women rose from 543 million in 1970 to 597 million in 1985, while the number of illiterate men rose from 348 million to 352 million.

And this: of 8,000 abortions in Bombay after parents learned the sex of the foetus through amniocentesis, only one would have been a boy.

Numbers can give words considerable power, the power to change.

The
World's
Trends and Statistics
Women
1970-1990

United Nations

To order a copy of *World's Women Trends and Statistics 1970-1990* at the discounted rate of $12.95 (plus $3.50 shipping and handling) contact:

United Nations Publications
2 United Nations Plaza,
Room DC2-853, Dept.027E
New York, NY 10017

Tel. 1-212-963-8302,
1-800-253-9646
Fax 1-212-963-3489

Table of contents:

Overview of the world's women
1. Women, families and households
2. Public life and leadership
3. Education and training
4. Health and child-bearing
5. Housing, human settlements and the environment
6. Women's work and the economy

Annexes:

The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Geographical groupings of countries and areas. Statistical sources.

Prior to the Conference, a number of meetings are taking place at the national, regional and international levels, organized by NGOs as well as by the United Nations. Following is a preliminary calendar, which also includes other major United Nations conferences:

1994

7-14 June, Jakarta, Indonesia
Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference

1-6 August, Turku, Finland
Nordic Forum

4-8 September, Amman, Jordan
Regional Expert Group Meeting on Women and Development

5-13 September, Cairo, Egypt
International Conference on Population and Development

19-23 September, Mar del Plata, Argentina
Regional NGO Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean ★

25-30 September, Mar del Plata, Argentina
Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Conference ★

17-21 October, Vienna, Austria
European Regional Preparatory Conference ★

6-10 November, Amman, Jordan
Western Asian Regional Preparatory Conference ★

16-23 November, Dakar, Senegal
African Regional Preparatory Conference ★

22-26 November, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
INSTRAW International Conference on Women, Environment and Health

1995

16 January–3 February, New York
Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 14th session

March
UNESCO Seminar on Women and the Media

6-12 March, Copenhagen, Denmark
World Summit for Social Development

9-10 March, New York
19th Inter-Agency Meeting on Women

9-24 March, New York
NGO consultations and meetings ★

13-24 March, New York
Commission on the Status of Women, 39th Session

30 August–8 September, Beijing, China
NGO Forum ★

4-15 September, Beijing, China
Fourth World Conference on Women

★ *Events related to the Fourth World Conference on Women*

Note to readers about this newsletter

Dear Readers,

This is the fourth issue of Women on the Move, *a monthly newsletter distributed by the secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women to inform you about its work and the preparatory activities for that event. We would like to hear your comments and receive your suggestions. We would also like to use* Women on the Move *as a platform for dialogue and cooperation with UN agencies, NGOs, grassroots regional organizations, national machineries and individuals.*

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27830—June 1994—3,000

Inclusion of youth, the vanguard of the 21st century, as members of delegations, is highly recommended to Member States and to NGOs.

Media Accreditation

Media interested in becoming accredited to the Conference may write to the Media Accreditation and Liaison Unit of the Department of Public Information, United Nations, Room S-250, New York, NY 10017, USA; Fax: 1 212/963 4642. Accreditation begins six months prior to the Conference. There will be a Media Centre with transmissions facilities at the Conference site in Beijing. Media accreditation to the Regional Preparatory Conferences should be arranged through the Regional Commissions (see list below).

For more information, contact:

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UN Economic and Social
Commission for Western
Asia
P.O. Box 927115
Amman, Jordan
Fax: 9626 694 980 / 981
or 982

Fourth World Conference on

WOMEN

**Action for
Equality,
Development
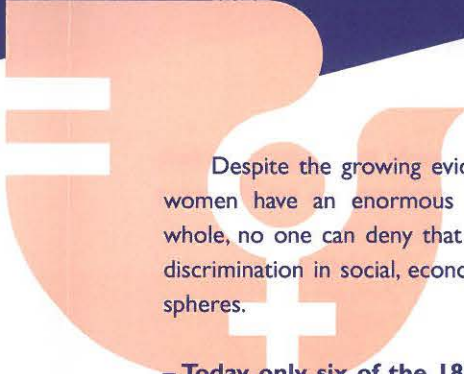and Peace**

**Beijing, China
4-15 September
1995**

Moving into the 21st century, the drive for women's rights has accelerated and taken on powerful and global momentum. In the 20 years since the first UN Conference on Women, the campaign for equality between women and men has witnessed momentous changes and undeniable advances:

– Women are entering the labour market in unprecedented numbers and pursuing a greater role at all levels of public life;

– Governments have adopted major legislation that promises women equal opportunities, treatment and respect of their rights;

– Thanks to pressure at all levels, women are increasingly gaining crucial access to proper health care, education and civil justice;

– Women's heightened awareness of their common problems has provoked a determined mobilization to fight discrimination and persistent injustices.

But just how much have these advances improved the life of the average woman? And, in view of the sustained social and economic crises facing much of the world today, just how deep is the commitment of Governments to eliminate discrimination against women?

In September 1995, thousands of women and men from around the world will meet in Beijing for the Fourth World Conference on Women. They will attempt to answer these questions, assessing the progress — and the shortfalls — of the past two decades, and identify action to be taken.

Despite the growing evidence that investments in women have an enormous impact on society as a whole, no one can deny that women continue to face discrimination in social, economic, political and cultural spheres.

– **Today only six of the 184 Ambassadors to the United Nations are women.** Only four of the 32 UN specialized agencies and programmes are headed by women.

– **In 1993 only six countries had women as heads of Government,** while the average proportion of women in the world's parliaments had dropped to 10 per cent — from 12 per cent in 1989. Women still lack resources, authority and meaningful decision-making powers.

– **Three quarters of women over 25 in much of Africa and Asia are illiterate,** a much higher rate than for men and a residue of past discrimination. Women account for two thirds of illiterate people in the world.

– On the average, **women receive between 30 and 40 per cent less pay than men for the same work.** At the same time, much of women's daily work is unremunerated and the value of household labour unrecorded.

– **Half a million women, nearly all of them in developing countries, die each year from pregnancy-related causes.** Thirty per cent of them are teenagers.

– **One third of all families worldwide are headed by women,** the majority of whom are poor, with dependants young and old. Lacking education, health and other support services, and frequently not having access to economic resources and legal protection,

these poor women confront significant obstacles to improving their situation.

– **Discrimination may affect women throughout their lives.** In many cultures, gender disparities start at the earliest stages of life.

– **In many parts of Asia and the Pacific, inferior health care and nutrition for girl children** coupled with maternal mortality and other factors have caused men to outnumber women by five in every 100. This is in contrast to demographic trends in the rest of the world, where women as a rule outnumber men.

– **Violence against women** is recognized to be pervasive across cultures and regions.

In order to achieve meaningful equitable partnership between women and men, much more will have to be done to change persistent stereotyped attitudes, to improve the conditions of women around the world and to promote and defend their human rights. The Conference offers Governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and individuals an opportunity to review their efforts and renew their commitment to the theme of the Conference: **Action for equality, development and peace.**

Goals of the Conference

The objectives of the Conference are:

– **To adopt a "Platform for Action",** concentrating on key issues — the "critical areas of concern" — identified as obstacles to the advancement of women in the world. It will reflect the review and appraisal of the advancement of women since 1985 in terms of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies

for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. This document will propose and suggest corresponding strategic objectives and action to be taken by Governments, the international community, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and individuals for the removal of the remaining obstacles to women's full and equal participation in development in all spheres of life. It will include actions to eradicate poverty; eliminate inequality in education; ensure access to relevant health care, employment and economic participation; further protection and preservation of the environment; end inequality in sharing of power and decision-making; improve images of women in the mass media; promote women's human rights; and eliminate violence against women.

– To determine the priority actions to be taken between 1996 and 2001 for the advancement of women by the international community, including the United Nations system.

– To mobilize women and men at both the policy-making and grass-roots levels to achieve those objectives.

Background Information

There have been three United Nations world conferences on women.

The first conference, held during International Women's Year in Mexico City, 1975, adopted a Plan of Action that led to the declaration, by the United Nations General Assembly, of the United Nations Decade for Women. In 1979 the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which to date has 133 States Parties. A committee of inde-

pendent experts reviews the implementation of the Convention, discusses reports submitted and makes recommendations to Governments for further improvement. These activities demonstrate the commitment of Governments to bring about positive change.

At the second conference, held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1980, a programme of action for the second half of the decade for women was adopted, with emphasis on education, employment and health.

The third world conference took place in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1985, to review and appraise achievements made and obstacles encountered during the decade for women. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000 were adopted by consensus. The Strategies provided a framework for action at the national, regional and international levels to promote empowerment of women and their enjoyment of human rights.

A 1990 evaluation of the Forward-looking Strategies by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women revealed that the world community had become more conscious of and sensitive to issues affecting women. However, there seemed to be some loss of momentum in implementation. The Fourth World Conference on Women aims to rekindle this momentum and focus on new issues, such as violence against women, including the issue of sexual harassment, which have been placed on the global agenda.

Preparatory Process

The preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women are already well under way. Mrs. Gertrude Mongella from Tanzania is Secretary-General of the Conference. Her office and the Division for the Advancement of Women, which are responsible for organizing the Conference and preparing its documents, are located at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Commission on the Status of Women is the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. The Commission, established in 1946, is an intergovernmental body consisting of 45 Member States, which meets annually. It is responsible for formulating global policies and recommendations for the advancement of women. The Commission has already held two sessions and one inter-sessional working group to prepare for the Conference. Its third and last preparatory meeting will be held from 15 March to 5 April 1995 in New York.

National Preparations

The Beijing Conference is the culmination of a process that begins with national preparations. The Commission on the Status of Women has underlined the importance of these national-level preparations. It also proposed guidelines for the preparation of national reports which are to be submitted, through the Conference Secretariat, to the Conference. National machineries for the advancement of women, together with other technical ministries, government agencies and NGOs, have the opportunity to take stock of the present situation of women at the national level, analyse the progress made since the Nairobi Conference and prepare for future action.

Regional Preparations

Five regional preparatory meetings under the auspices of the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions are scheduled for 1994 (the calendar includes parallel regional NGO preparatory meetings as well): in Jakarta, Indonesia, for Asia and the Pacific, 7-14 June 1994; in Mar del Plata, Argentina, for Latin America and the Caribbean, 25-29 September 1994 (with NGO Forum, 19-23 September); in Vienna, Austria, for Europe, 17-21 October 1994 (with NGO Forum, 13-15 October); in Amman, Jordan, for Arab countries, 6-10 November 1994 (with NGO Forum, 3-5 November); in Dakar, Senegal, for Africa, 16-23 November 1994 (with NGO Forum, 13-15 November). Other meetings are also envisaged as part of the preparatory process.

Regional meetings are very important for assessing the key issues for women on a regional basis and providing input to regional reports for the Conference.

Eligibility for Participation

The Conference is an intergovernmental meeting convened by the United Nations. Other participants and observers will include organizations of the UN system, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and those NGOs accredited by the Commission on the Status of Women. Further information on accreditation can be obtained from the Secretariat, Fourth World Conference on Women.

A parallel NGO Forum on Women '95 will be held in Beijing from 30 August to 8 September 1995. It is open to all interested persons and is being planned under the direction of the NGO Forum Planning Committee. Information on registration can be obtained from the NGO Forum Secretariat.